

# Inside Outside

THE INDIAN DESIGN MAGAZINE

ISSUE 312 JUNE 2011

₹ 50



**TWO MUMBAI APARTMENTS, one contemporary and the other 30 years old – both filled with art and collectibles**



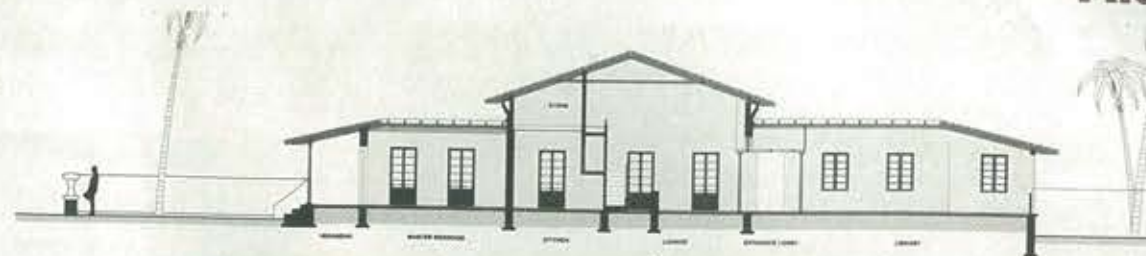
**Goan architect Rahul Deshpande speaks a versatile language**

Also work by Rajiv Saini, Morphogenesis, Sunil Humane & Verendra Wakhloo





Rahul Deshpande is no stranger to the pages of Inside Outside. We have been covering him from as far back as 2000. Each time he surprises us with the sheer versatility of his architectural vocabulary, as he designs by responding to locale and his brief. We feature a conversion of an old structure, which he has sensitively transformed into a residence-cum-library, a bus terminal in a remote village and a sleek, contemporary office building for a multinational, all in Goa.

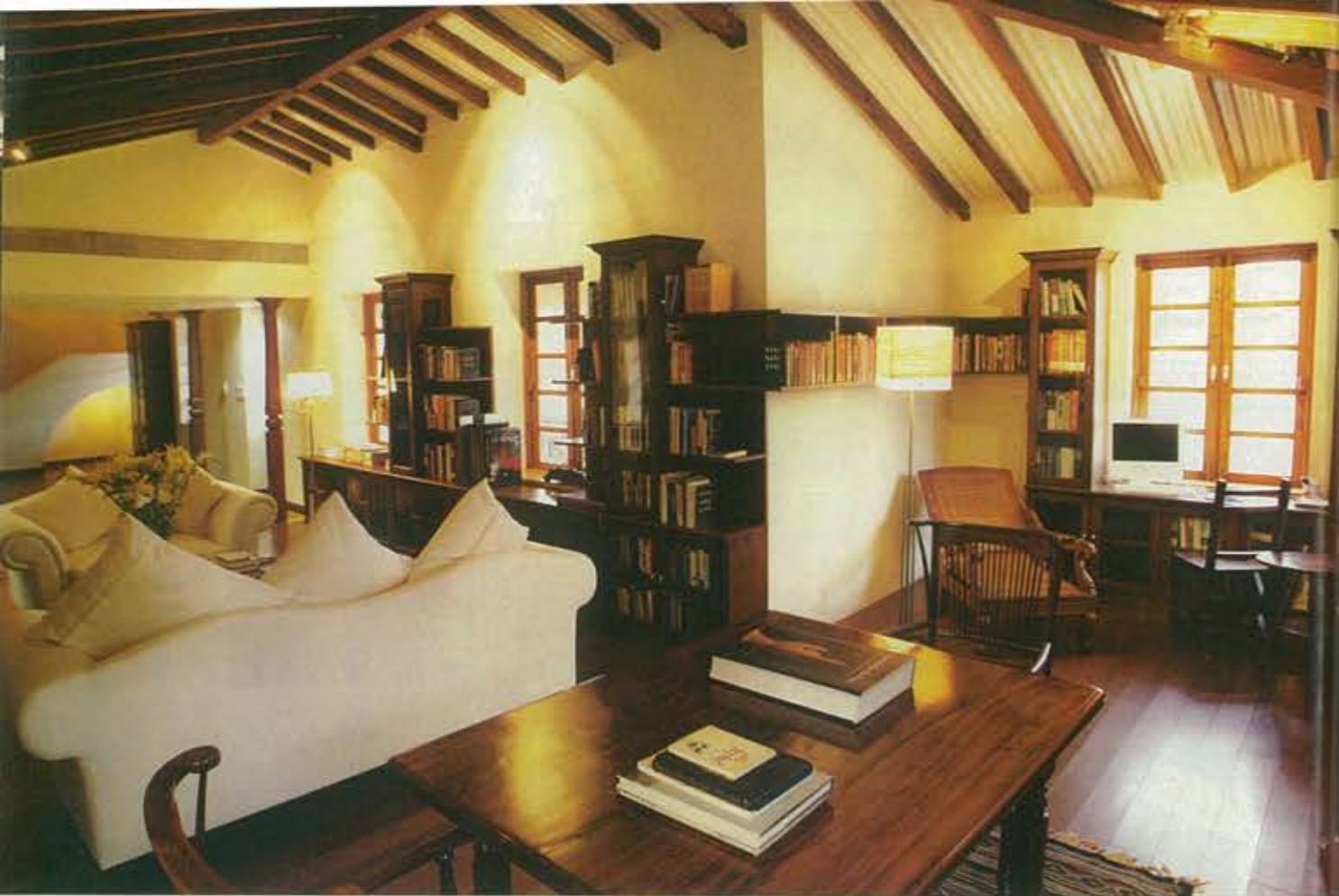


## A VERSATILE LANGUAGE

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY THE ARCHITECT



Raveena, Shilpa and Rahul Deshpande



### Ye Olde library

When Subur and Naseer Munjee decided to get a home in Goa (Inside Outside 2004), they selected Chorao Island near Panaji, where they bought an old Portuguese house, restored it, moved in (a decade ago) . . . and lived happily thereafter!

It was their ardent love for books and their studious bent of mind that fermented their decision to invest in another old property just opposite their home. This rundown structure had earlier been used as a public library for the people of the village. Wanting to respect its history, the Munjees asked Rahul (who had also restored their first home) to convert a greater part of the house into a reading and study area. They also told the architect to squeeze in as much space for a lifetime's collection of books, two guest bedrooms, a pantry-kitchen and a cosy space for a lounge bar, where evenings could flow over with Cuban cigars and cognac.

Rahul decided it would only be possible to restore the existing architectural style of the house to its former glory, by reconstructing the structure from scratch on the existing plinth. The houses in the island of Chorao have an imperial feel to them as during the colonial rule, the higher echelons of the Portuguese classes made their homes here. And



The library is a treasure trove of tomes on diverse subjects. It has been tastefully designed, keeping in mind the modern needs of every family while adhering to the building's old world charm. Traditional furniture mingles with contemporary pieces like the large white sofas, while lamps near the specially designed wooden shelves, invite you to browse through the books.



But if you have had a long day, have a drink at the lounge or pick up a hot cappuccino or glass of wine from the kitchen/pantry...and through the slender partition door, enjoy the view of the garden while sitting at the table.





**FACT FILE:**

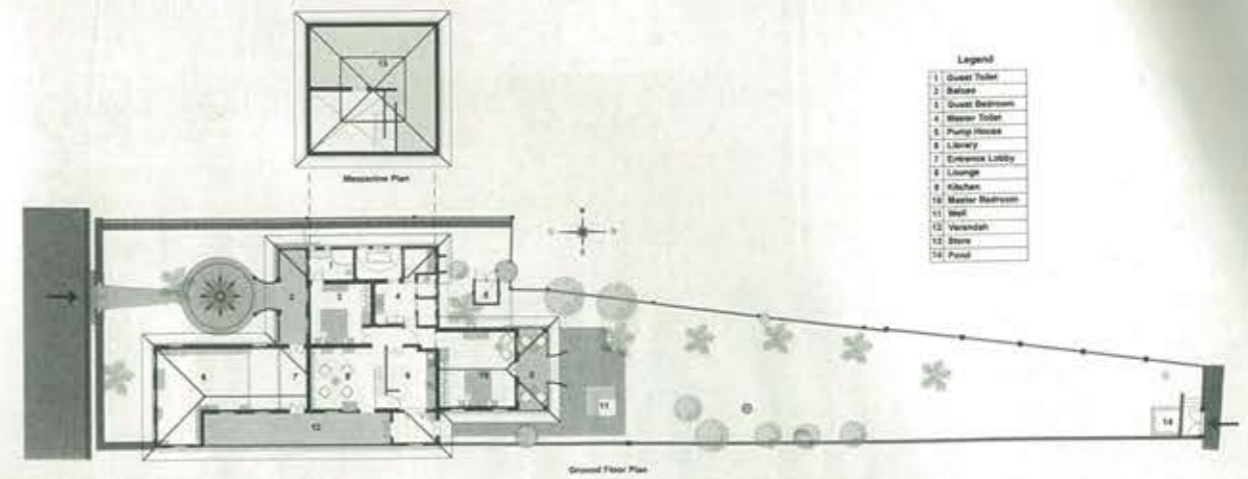
Project: Bungalow-cum-library.  
 Architect: Rahul Deshpande & Associates, Goa.  
 Design Team: Rahul Deshpande, Anil Palekar, Archana Mahambare Karpe & Ezra D'Souza.  
 Interior Designer: Subur Munjee  
 Electrical Consultant: R D Bhide  
 Contractor: M/s Omkar  
 Built up Area: 250 sq mts.  
 Cost of Project: ₹ 90 lakhs  
 Year of Completion: January 2009.

perhaps that is why the 'Olde Library' invites you in with a statute of a sentinel on the garden parapet. As you walk in through the gate, a beautiful floral mosaic on the floor leads you on to the front balcao. You can sit at the old balcao for a friendly chat or walk straight in through the tall wooden, panelled door.

Inside, from the jaisalmer tiled lobby, you can opt to go onto the verandah facing the football field or encounter a voluminous library on the right. Browsing through the book cabinets, you understand why the globetrotting Munjee couple finds intellectual solace in this place. The library, with a couch to slump on or sit straight on chairs near the table, is a treasure trove of tomes on diverse subjects. It has been tastefully designed keeping in mind the modern needs of every family while adhering to the building's old world charm. Traditional furniture mingles with contemporary pieces like the large white sofas, while lamps near the specially designed wooden shelves invite you to browse through the books, with soft indirect lighting giving a warm and restful feel to the whole room.

This is the interesting aspect of the design – how contemporary needs have been cleverly but subtly incorporated without them being in your face. In the lobby, for example, four wooden columns have been strategically placed to hold the concealed AC units. And the roof with traditional Mangalore tiles is placed over GI sheet rafters to ensure the rooms are protected from rain, moisture, insects and dust.

Further inwards, step into the master bedroom – into another era! The four-poster canopy bed and other pieces of wooden furniture accentuate



Legend	
1	Guest Toilet
2	Balcony
3	Guest Bedroom
4	Master Toilet
5	Pump House
6	Library
7	Emergency Lobby
8	Lounge
9	Kitchen
10	Master Bedroom
11	Well
12	Verandah
13	Store
14	Pool

that feeling of being in a 'grande olde house'. Numerous windows ensure the room always has ample light and ventilation.

The highlight, of course is the spacious bathroom within which are demarcated areas for the sunken tub, the steam room, the shower and the WC. The room has a royal feel to it with candles placed in the slits on the walls above the large tub, illuminating the space and creating a soothing atmosphere, while the customised window panes allow only the person inside the bathroom to look through.

A recurring feature in the house is the oblong doors with glass panes which allows light to seep into the interiors, while a hatch in the doors offers the flexibility of converting the door to serve the purpose of a window.

The Munjees' Olde Library is a house that combines the old with the new in an attempt to rise above the complexities of modern life and treasure what the past has given us.

The master bedroom with a four-poster canopy bed and numerous windows that ensure the room always has ample light and ventilation.

The spacious bathroom has demarcated areas for a sunken tub, steam room, shower and WC. Candles in slits on the walls above the large tub, illuminate the space and create a soothing atmosphere.





### Bus Terminal at Shiroda

Professionally designed bus stations? Isn't that exactly what India needs? 'Design', percolating to the common man, to everyday utilities.... Rahul Deshpande has done exactly that, in his design of a bus terminal for the Goa State Infrastructure Development Corporation in Goa.



Shiroda, a small town on the banks of the Zuari River in the interior Ponda province of Goa, is surrounded by lush orchards growing coconut, betel nut, pepper, pineapple and, of late, vanilla – but it is best known for its temple complex, dedicated to the Goddess Kamakshi, who has the Garuda as her vehicle. Coincidentally, the graceful, white-breasted 'Brahminy' kite, which soars like an eagle, is a bird native to Shiroda. 'The Brahminy kite, its flight, and the green orchards were therefore the obvious metaphors for our design,' says Rahul.

Two balanced steel-truss cantilevers, each 12 mts (over 39 ft) long, stretch out from a central beam supported by columns, which also acts as a gutter for rain water. A post-modern structure, it creates a vision of a soaring eagle complete with a head and beak mounted at the façade.

#### Form and function

The whole complex is designed as a synthesis of low capital cost and running expenditure (maintenance is generally poor at most facilities in India), combined with materials that require minimal maintenance. The lightweight roof is of structural galvanised steel tubes and UV-proof PVC sheeting, while the

A post-modern structure, this bus terminal creates the vision of a soaring eagle, complete with a head and beak mounted on the façade!

#### FACT FILE:

Project: Shiroda Bus stand, Shiroda.  
 Architect: Rahul Deshpande  
 Client: Goa State Infrastructure Development Corporation  
 Structural Design Team: Rahul Deshpande, Anil Palekar, Archana Mahambare, Karpe & Nisarg Gaude.  
 Project Management Consultancy: Rahul Deshpande & Ranjeesh Gopal.  
 Electrical Consultant: Castellino Consultant.  
 Contractor: SMC Infrastructure Pvt Ltd  
 Built up Area: 1,512 sq mts.  
 Cost of Project: ₹255 lakhs  
 Year of Completion: July 2008.





interior is clad with easy-to-clean (and replace) ceramic tiles.

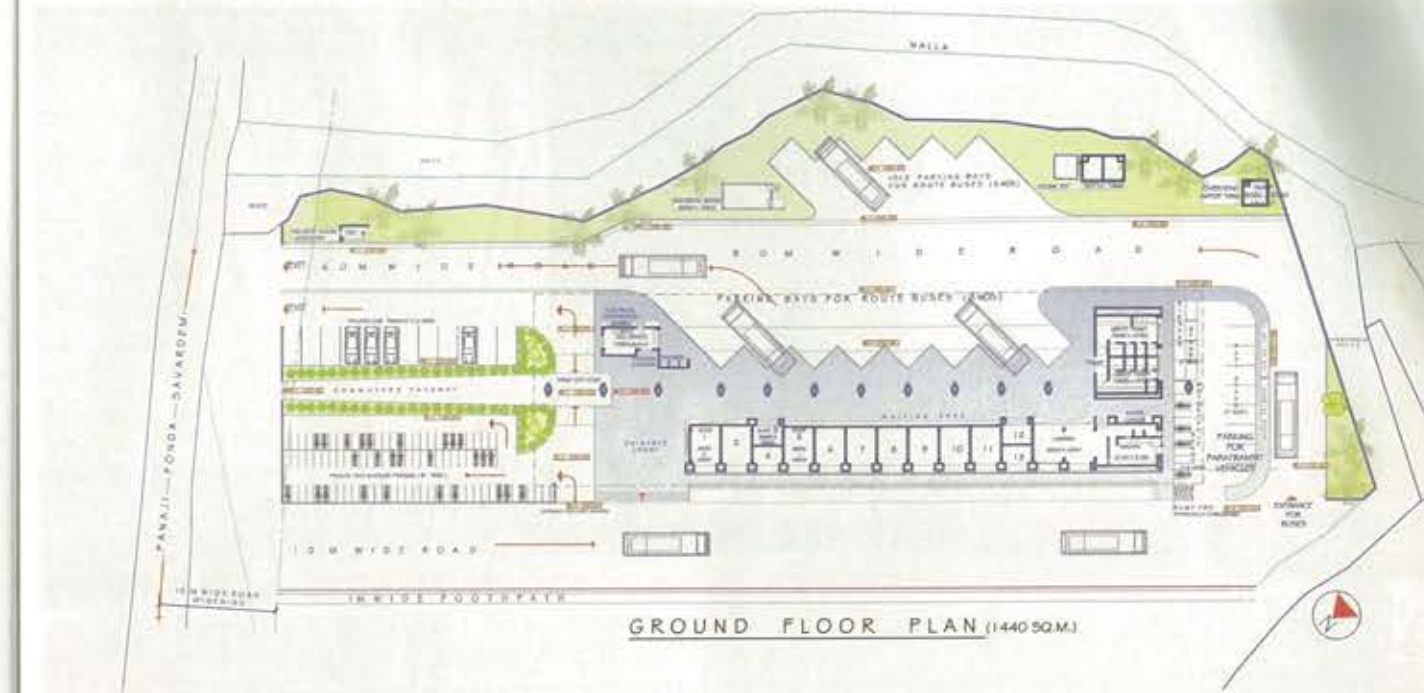
Despite the higher initial expenditure, the roads and concourses are in concrete rather than asphalt/macadam, as they last four times longer. All the fixtures, including the faucets and fittings in the bathrooms, are heavy-duty, to ensure durability.

### Comfort, convenience and safety

Ease of access merges effortlessly with safety, as there are separate entrances and exits for commuters, buses, cars, transit vehicles and two wheelers belonging to commuters and visitors. 'Nowhere here, do people find themselves at risk. No bus driver ever needs to swerve to avoid an oncoming vehicle or bus – there simply aren't any!' says Rahul.

Boarding and alighting have different areas, so there is no crunch at the doors of the buses and there are adequate rest-rooms, inquiry counters, waiting areas, shops and food outlets.

The façade and the interiors are in myriad shades of green – light and dark – that blend with the verdant orchards that surround it. The structure virtually seems to be part of the landscape, allowing the columns, beam and roof comprising the Garuda to soar unfettered.



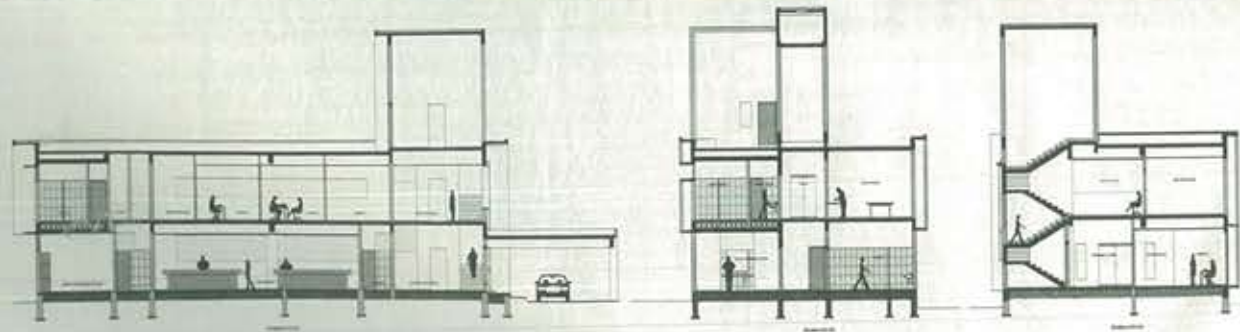
The façade and the interiors are in myriad shades of green that blend with the verdant orchards that surround the bus terminal.





## Simple isn't it?

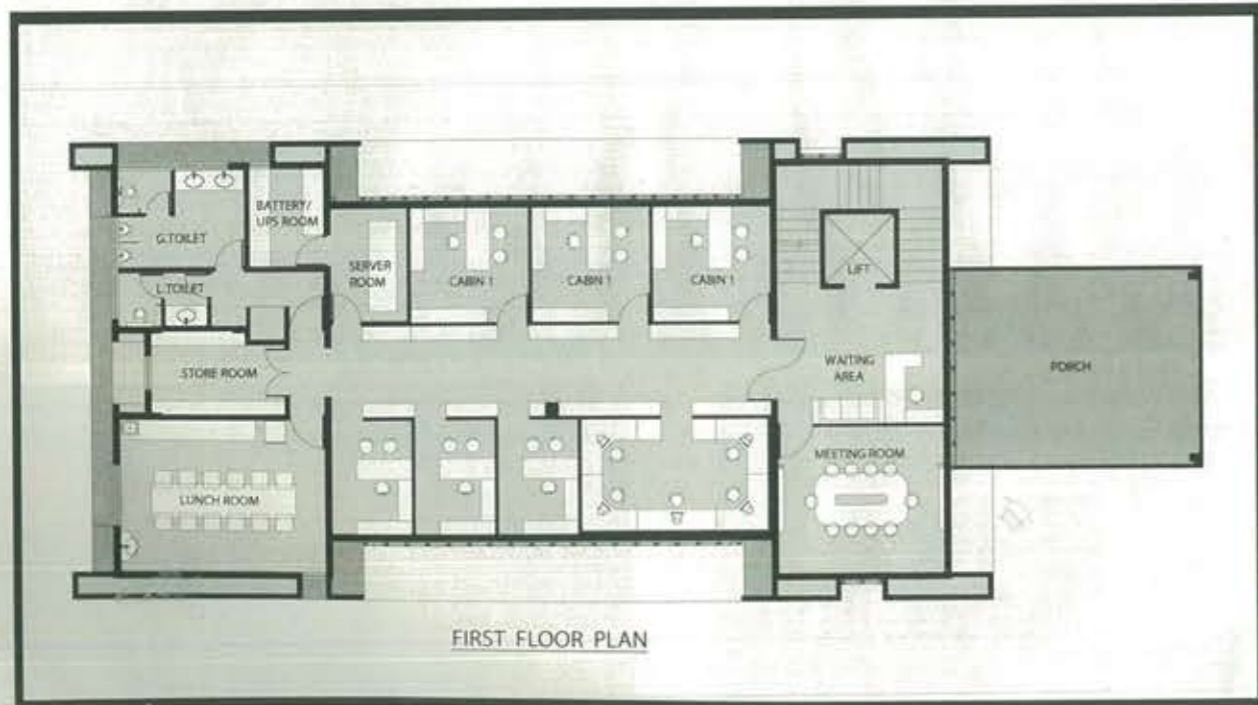
When Umicore, a Belgium conglomerate, manufacturing zinc oxide asked Rahul Deshpande to design an office building for its first plant in India, they wanted it to reflect the company's philosophy of simplicity and transparency.





GROUND FLOOR PLAN

The Umicore office building with its straight lines, subtle colours and structured design, stands tall amidst the rugged environs of the Sancoale Industrial Estate, while its interiors plan is as simple and straightforward as its exteriors.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

It took Rahul just ten months to build this sleek and smart office that stands tall amidst the rugged environs of the Sancoale Industrial Estate, with its straight lines, subtle colours and structured design. The interior plan is as simple and straightforward as the exteriors. The ground floor houses two units – a laboratory for easy access to samples from the shop floor, and diametrically opposite, on the rear, a changing room and a lunch room for the workers.

On the first floor is the administrative block, with the meeting room strategically placed at the entrance to maintain privacy from the rest of the office. Through a small but functional lobby, one goes into the main space. On the right of a well lit and spacious passage are cabins for the heads of departments, while the corresponding officers sit in their cubicles outside.

Keeping in the mind the context of the brief, the interiors are basic, while the colours and furnishings chosen create a bright and fun working environment.

Cool colours like shades of beige, green, blue, cream and ivory lend a welcoming feel, while large windows offer a view of the outside.

Since the first floor area has only one structural column, there is plenty of room for flexibility and for future adjustments as the space can be converted into one large hall if needed. The north side of the building is glazed on the front and the sides. This allows enough natural light to enter the office space. The architects have ingeniously masked all outward projections like AC units, electrical cables, drainage pipes, etc. The building roof is punctuated by two towers clad with zinc sheets, a signature product of Umicore.

Says Rahul, 'It was a tough assignment as the budget was tight and the brief was challenging. As simplicity was to be its soul, I decided on a geometry of straight lines as it was important to keep everything as simple as possible – the plan, the elevation and the function.'

**FACT FILE:**

**Project:** Office Building for Umicore Anandeya India Pvt Ltd, Sancoale, Goa  
**Architect:** Rahul Deshpande Structural Design: Rahul Deshpande, Archana Mahabare Karpe & Nisarg Gaude  
**Management Consultancy:** Rahul Deshpande & Ranjeesh Gopal  
**Electrical Consultant:** Castellino Engineering Consultants Pvt Ltd  
**Contractor Civil:** Acron Infra Project Pvt Ltd  
**Contractor Electrical:** Akshar Electricals.  
**Built-up Area:** 520 sq mts.  
**Year of Completion:** 2010.

