

2020

10 HERITAGE DESIGN TIPS

PRACTICAL ADVICE WHEN DESIGNING YOUR HERITAGE
RENOVATION



Heritage Design

WELCOME TO THE GUIDE!

Working with Heritage for some time, I have come to realise that there is so much misinformation out there about renovating and changing these homes and buildings.

I often hear so many reasons why changes can't be made which can deter people from achieving the best possible design of their renovation. Feeling that they are limited to not being able to change their home and make it their own.

The good news is that changes can be made and when these changes are well designed will make a positive contribution to the home and make it a great space in which to live.

This guide answers some of the most frequently asked questions to help you in gain clarity around the opportunities for your own renovation project.

"MANAGING
CHANGE TO
HERITAGE
PLACES IS
ABOUT
MAKING GOOD
DESIGN
DECISIONS"



"The changes you make contribute to the story of the home and in time will also be part of it's unique history"

01. Change

IS IT OK TO CHANGE A HERITAGE BUILDING?

Most homes and buildings have undergone change at some stage throughout their life. This could be minor repairs and maintenance, a new color scheme or major changes to the layout,

Often the changes resonate part of the story of the house and reflect what was going on for the occupants at the time and what was fashionable.

Some changes are without a doubt disastrous and have caused irreparable damage or loss of important building fabric - usually in an attempt to 'modernise'.

Changes in the use can also be seen in the building itself. This is often the case with civic, commercial or religious buildings, where they have been converted to fit another purpose.

Change is ok, as long as it is considerate of the building, its history and it is designed and managed to achieve an outcome for now and the future.

Designing for a Heritage Building often requires a more 'gentle' and thoughtful approach. Based on informed decision making, appreciating the homes and working with those features that appealed to you and made you take on the home in the first place.

02. Replication

CAN THE NEW WORK BE MODERN OR DOES IT HAVE TO MATCH THE EXISTING BUILDING?

Replication is generally a very big No No! In most situations it is best to differentiate between the existing building and the new works. Having this distinction can provide the opportunity to create a unique design



that compliments or contrasts with the existent part of the building.

Building additions can be sympathetic and reflect the form of the original house – yes – that's ok as long as the intention is not to recreate a heritage building.

When undertaking Restoration and conservation works it can be necessary to closely reproduce some parts of the building BUT .. there should always be some point of difference to able to recognise the new from the old.

New additions can also be very contemporary. Modern cutting edge design can can work brilliantly when designed well. Having a sharp contrast can showcase the best parts of both styles.

03. Significance

WHAT PARTS OF MY HOME ARE SIGNIFICANT?

It is important to know as much as possible about your home.

Listed houses may have a Statement of Significance which sets out what is important about the property and why. The identified significance guides what needs to be preserved.

If there is no statement of significance, knowing the history of your home, identifying it's style and when it was built can contribute to fully appreciating it's design and can inform the future changes.

Old photos or plans and thoroughly investigating the building can also help to inform and guide the proposed design.

Understanding the items of importance, the key features allows you to acknowledge the individuality of your home. This also assists in future decision making of what to change and what to preserve.

**"BE REALISTIC
IN YOUR
EXPECTATION
S FOR WHAT
YOU CAN
ACHIEVE WITH
YOUR
HERITAGE
HOME "**



04. Interior

I HAVE A VICTORIAN HOME BUT WANT A MORE MODERN STYLE FOR MY RENOVATION - IS THAT OK?

The interior style of new works should not seek to replicate the exact detailing of the original home. While the design can take cues from the original detailing it is often better to pair down the detail so as not to compete with the original building. Introducing a totally different theme - say a contemporary interior acts in contrast with the period of the original home which is totally ok. This will make the new work complimentary and not compete with the original detailing.

05. Siting

THE MOST CONVENIENT PLACE TO BUILD A GARAGE IS IN FRONT OF MY HOUSE - IS THIS A GOOD IDEA?

In most cases it is best if the car accommodation is located to the rear – or at least have it set back from the frontage of the house. This does depend on the period of the home. Be mindful that some homes would not have had garages - as there were no cars to be accommodated!

When it is the home that is the most important building on your site, any additions such as garages and carports should be treated as secondary. They should remain visually subservient. Smaller and set back.

06. Color

DO I HAVE TO PAINT MY HOUSE IN HERITAGE COLORS?

Questions about paint colors and heritage color schemes are by far the most frequently asked! In particular - "Do I have to paint my house cream and have Brunswick Green trims?" - Definitely not!!!! Well it will depend on it's style, era, significance and location of your home. Sometimes Town Planning controls may require you to have a more traditional scheme or there may be evidence that your house was painted in a particular color that may need to be reinstated, however if this is not the case, your home may look great with a contemporary 'twist' on a traditional scheme (contradiction I know!), Some homes look great with a scheme that closely resonates with the traditional 'rules' for what color goes where even if the scheme is not strictly as it was 'back in the day'.

07. Scale

I WANT TO ADD LARGE LIVING ROOMS TO MY HOME - HOW CAN I ACHIEVE THIS WHEN THE EXISTING SPACES ARE QUITE SMALL?

Achieving large spaces when your home is small in scale can be a challenging design exercise. Creating a series of smaller spaces and joining them together, articulating larger additions to 'read' as a group of smaller spaces are ways of manipulating the form and geometry of the additions to achieve the desired outcome. Creating large spaces that appear to be consistent with the scale and size of the existing building can also create interest in the building form.

08. Bulk

CAN I ADD A DOUBLE STOREY ADDITION TO SINGLE STOREY HOME?

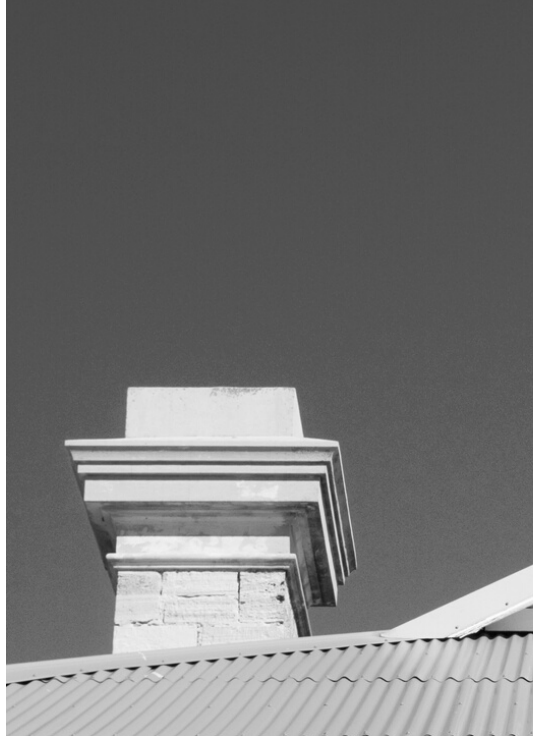
Designing a 2 storey addition does add some complexities to the design, however it can be done. Using attic spaces, lowering the wall heights and being creative with the roof lines can integrate a double storey addition gently into the building. It is really important to consider the bulk, scale and siting when designing a 2 storey addition. The visual impact on the existing house, the neighbour's house and the streetscape all need to be taken into consideration to ensure that the new works do not overwhelm the original and most important aspects of the site, the heritage house.

09. Detail

DO I HAVE TO REPLICATE ALL THE EXTERNAL DETAILING AND USE THE SAME MATERIALS IN THE ADDITIONS?

It is best practice not to replicate the same detailing to ensure there is a clear distinction between the existing and the new works. If the new additions are sympathetic to the existing home, the concept of 'busy Lizzy at the front - plane Jane to the rear' pretty much sums up the ideal. Replication in the detail is out. You can use consistent materials through out the work, even it is used in different ways. this is often a good way to maintain cohesion throughout the project without succumbing to replication.





10. Planning Controls

MY HOME IS LISTED IN THE LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME - DOES THIS MEAN I CANNOT RENOVATE OR EXTEND?

Planning controls set parameters for what can and can't be done on a listed property. What works can be undertaken on the site will depend on the level of listing and what is identified as being significant.

Houses and buildings can also be located within a Heritage Precinct or Overlay which will have a set of Provisions and objectives that will need to be addressed through the formal approval process in order for the proposal to proceed.

A Designer who is skilled in Heritage Design and who is well versed and experienced in preparing heritage applications is the best person to navigate through this one. There are lots of 'grey' areas!

If your building has a higher level listing, such as a listing on the State Heritage Register, then this requires a different set of approvals.

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BUILDING DESIGN



Renovating your home and want to talk specifics with our
Heritage Designer?

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