

Dwelling House Additions

First floor additions to single storey houses in conservation areas almost always detract from heritage significance. This is particularly a problem with semi-detached dwellings where the buildings are intended to read as a single entity.

When constructing new dwellings in conservation areas or making additions to heritage items, the following issues need to be considered:

- Character of surrounding locality
- Identifying the most common types of buildings to the street (i.e whether predominantly single, two or three storeys)
- Proportions of various elements, such as doors and windows and the spaces between or around them; width of fascias; projection of eaves; spacing and weight of verandah posts; fretwork and the effect of shadows created by verandhas and projecting windows and awnings
- Maintaining front and side setbacks, particularly where garage or parking is at side or rear
- Front garden spaces, fencing, details and streetscape character
- The architectural style and various parts of a building and its heritage significance.

Any proposal to alter or add to a building should start by assessing the heritage significance of the building and its various parts and also the context within which it will be placed. It is important to understand the architectural style and various parts of a building and its heritage significance.

Alterations and additions should be consistent with the original character of the dwelling, observing the massing, scale, proportion, and details of the existing fabric when blending the new with the old. The scale and bulk of the new should be similar in scale and preferably smaller in size than the original dwelling.



Side roof conversion in a conservation area



Additions are usually best sited to the rear or side. Contemporary additions may be appropriate when they do not detract from streetscape values within the area. A building's streetscape appearance, that is, its facades and other exterior elements that are visible from the street, are very important to the character of a conservation area.



Rear second storey addition

Depending upon heritage significance, architectural style, siting, accommodation needs and the proposed use, the following types of additions may be appropriate:

Lean To

A common, inexpensive and traditional form of addition. Sited to the rear, it is generally suitable for buildings of most architectural styles. Lean-to roofs should be pitched, rather than flat.

Wing

The provision of a side or rear wing is also a common form of addition. The roof pitch should match that of the existing building, and additions to side elevations should be constructed in a manner that repeats the detailing of the existing building if visible from the street and should balance the overall design.



Rear wing addition in Bradleys Head Road conservation area, seen from Thompson Street

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Pavilion

Suitable when the original building is of higher significance and it is desired to leave it relatively intact. Generally the roof pitch in the front should be repeated in the rear pavilion, and windows or a glazed connection often helps separate new from old.

Basement

Generally suitable where the site is sloping and it is possible to obtain additional accommodation with only a small amount of excavation

Split level

It may be possible to take advantage of a sloping site to allow for two storeys in the bulk of a single storey addition by using split level planning at the rear.

Roof conversion

Depending on the style of the building, the introduction of attic spaces with dormer windows to provide natural light may be an appropriate option. The height of such additions should be kept low and roof forms integrated into the existing roof to reduce any visual intrusion. Roof windows in the plane of the roof may also be suitable. These and dormer windows should generally be located in the rear pitch of the roof and not be visible from the street. Dormer windows may be permitted on the front facade where they will not have an adverse heritage or streetscape impact.



This roof conversion in Spencer Road won the Heritage prize at the Mosman Design Awards 2004



Additional Storey

Second floor addition to a single storey house is considered appropriate where an existing single storey building not listed as an item is surrounded by two storey buildings and where the style of the existing building is typically found in a two storey version.



Additional storey with visibility from the street minimised

Outbuildings

Outbuildings should relate to the dwelling in a design that follows in form, detailing and proportions. Setbacks from the street for both house and outbuilding(s) should reflect that of the street.

Additions visible from the street should be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the style of the building and using matching materials and details. The use of a modern style is generally not appropriate for buildings in a conservation area. The common desire to replace existing original elements and materials with current versions in new materials should be avoided. In trying to retain the original fabric, it is important that original elements such as windows, chimneys, verandah details, etc. are not removed as these contribute a great deal to integrity of the building and character of the area. The detailing of additions should be appropriate to the style and nature of the building. Over-elaborate detailing on extensions to simple houses should also be carefully considered. The infilling of verandahs to create additional space or to shield traffic noise will not be supported.

Before considering additions and alterations to your home, please consult the Mosman Residential Development Control Plan and the Mosman Heritage Advisory Service.