

Good Solutions Guide

FOR HERITAGE BUILDINGS



HERITAGE BUILDINGS are a valued feature in our community, enriching the environment while providing us with links to our past.

Older houses are generally not set up for modern day living as they were built before gas or electricity was available, when bathrooms and kitchens were simple, living areas did not link well with the outdoors and televisions, radios and cars were not on the scene. Many older houses have been adapted for today's necessities and, in a lot of cases, these changes have considerably altered the houses' appearance.



*Group at Fogham's, Lucas Creek, 1870.
Alexander Turnbull Library.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK

We hope this guide has been useful and would like your feedback. Please let us know what you think by writing to us at Strategy and Policy Division, North Shore City Council, Private Bag 93500, 1 The Strand, Takapuna, North Shore City, visiting our website at www.northshorecity.govt.nz or emailing us at goodsolutions@northshorecity.govt.nz.

OTHER DOCUMENTS TO CONSULT

This Good Solutions guide is not a statutory document but provides useful guidelines. It should be read in conjunction with *Valuing our built heritage: making changes to heritage buildings in North Shore City*. This booklet discusses the city's District Plan requirements and provides advice about making resource consent applications for restoring, altering or removing heritage buildings. Please contact Environmental Services on 09 486 8600 if you require further information.



Many homeowners now seek modern conveniences without changing the character of their home, while some wish to extend their house but in keeping with its historic character and style.

Adapting older houses to meet our everyday needs while preserving their unique heritage qualities is essential. Heritage buildings that do not cater for our needs or suit our lifestyles may lose their value or be replaced with new buildings. We need to be able to alter old houses so that they meet today's standards and maintain their appearance and neighbourhood character.



WHO SHOULD USE THIS GUIDE AND WHY

This guide is aimed at helping owners who are considering altering their heritage property. It looks at ways to research your home, explains house styles and suggests appropriate ways of making changes to your property.

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Guiding principles for changing heritage buildings

THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES FORM THE BASIS FOR CHANGING YOUR HERITAGE HOME FOR THE BETTER:

- understanding its history and architectural character
- using materials, features and forms that are appropriate for the age and style of the house
- minimising changes
- preserving original external and interior features
- retaining sound elements that are visibly aged, they tell a story about the place
- repairing elements instead of replacing them
- restoring elements only if you have clear evidence of their original form
- making changes that look like they belong without them appearing original
- keeping the original street front or appearance intact
- repeating original details for windows, doors and trims on front and side façades or where visible from the street
- considering extensions at the rear before extending other parts of the house
- maintaining the original layout of important rooms
- paying attention to detail – small things can make a difference.

...AND SOME THINGS TO AVOID:

- converting a house into a different style by mixing features from different periods
- compromising historic character by using modern materials that are not compatible such as aluminium windows and doors, imitation brick or stone cladding, fibrolite sheeting, concrete block and breeze block
- over-restoring or overusing features such as turrets, bay windows, finials and ornate verandah details
- exceeding the height of the original house
- enclosing verandahs that alter the overall appearance
- altering the interior so that all trace of the original layout is lost
- obscuring the house behind a garage or high wall.

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Finding out about your house

One of the most important aspects to altering a heritage building successfully is being clear about its history. Try to find out when it was built, its style and period, who lived in it and what changes were made and why.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR INFORMATION ¹

North Shore City Council property files, 521 Lake Road, Takapuna, tel: 09 486 8600

- original plans or specifications
- early drainage plans showing house outlines (location)
- permit (consent) drawings if the house has been altered.

Land Information New Zealand, Oracle Tower, 56 Wakefield Street, Auckland, tel: 09 377 1499

- Certificates of Title from the present owner back to the original owner
- references to legal documents such as mortgages, wills and bankruptcies
- Deposit Plans showing survey and registration dates, and house outlines.

North Shore City Council Archives, basement of Sovereign House seaward side, Channel View Road, Takapuna, tel: 09 486 8600 ext. 8834

- rates and valuation rolls showing who lived in the house and its relative value
- building permit registers
- some original plans mostly for Devonport houses
- a range of maps showing the subdivision of areas and house outlines.

Local Libraries and the Takapuna Library New Zealand Collection

- photographs indexed by street and early aerial photographs
- electoral rolls
- tender notices
- local history books
- old street directories, newspapers, trade catalogues and advertisements.

Auckland City Library's Heritage Floor, 44-46 Lorne Street, Auckland, tel: 09 377 0209

- tender details or information about architecturally designed houses in New Zealand, architectural journals from 1918 – 1932, New Zealand Home and Building from 1936 and daily newspapers
- copies of the Auckland Weekly News
- a range of Auckland directories
- an extensive photographic collection listed by area.

Devonport Museum, Mt Cambria Reserve, 33A Vauxhall Road, tel: 09 445 2661 (open 2-4 pm Sat/Sun)

- family and general history, and information about Devonport houses.

Birkenhead Historical Society Museum, 44 Mahara Avenue, Birkenhead (open 2-4 pm Sunday)

- family and general history about Northcote, Birkenhead and Birkdale.

The Auckland Museum Library, Auckland Domain, tel: 09 309 0443

- photographs catalogued by locality
- a large collection of manuscripts.

Archives New Zealand, 525 Mt Wellington Highway, Auckland, tel: 09 636 1465

- discharged mortgages, wills and bankruptcy files.

Another way of finding out about your house is by searching for clues that show how the physical elements have changed. Check for markings in paintwork and on finishes indicating where finishes once were. For instance, ridges under the paint showing where a roof once was, nail holes on the floor showing where a wall was and patterns indicating mouldings on posts or handrails. Also look for discarded materials under the house, and outhouses built with bits which have been removed from the main house.²

¹ To find out more about researching try Jan Harris, *A Handbook for Researchers* (New Zealand Historic Places Trust, Wellington, 1995).

² Books about researching physical changes to houses include Christopher Cochran, *Restoring a New Zealand House* (New Zealand Historic Places Trust, Wellington, 1991), Ian Evans, *Restoring Old Houses: a guide to authentic restoration* (Sun Books Ltd, Melbourne, 1983) and Miles Lewis, *Physical Investigation of a Building* (National Trust of Australia, Melbourne, 1989).

HOUSE TYPES

Houses built here between 1860 and 1940 were based on overseas domestic building styles and were modified to suit local conditions such as the climate, and the supply and cost of building materials. Over this time the way in which our houses were designed steadily evolved.³

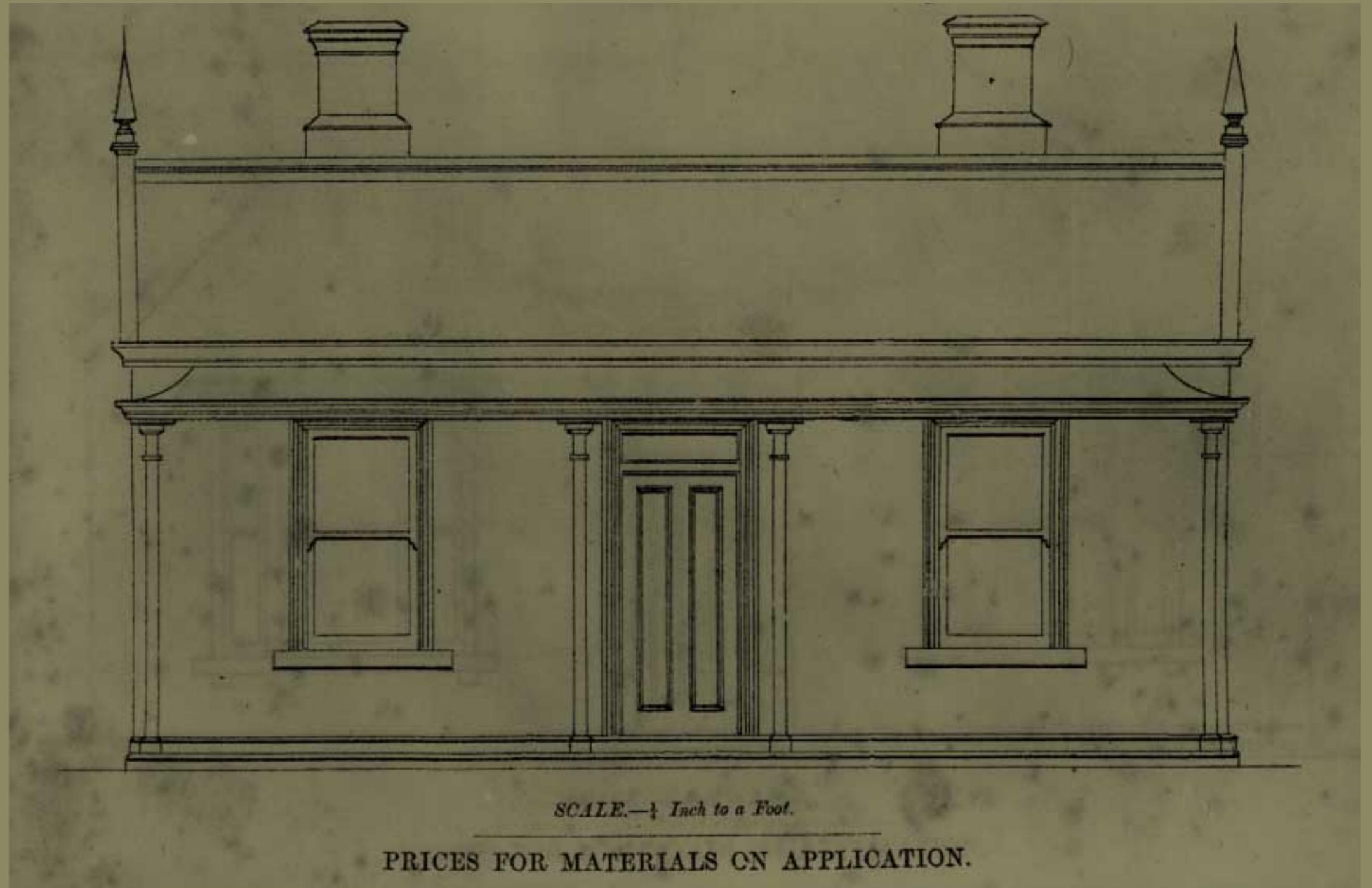
Cottages

Many early dwellings were workers' houses or cottages. Cottages had two or four small rooms under a hip and gable roof with a lean-to (building with its roof leaning against a larger building or wall) at the rear for the kitchen. Rooms often served more than one purpose – living rooms by day and bedrooms at night. Some cottages had attic rooms with a dormer window to let light in. Common features were:

- symmetrical design at the front with a door in the middle and windows on either side
- front door opens into a narrow passage or sometimes into the living room
- main bedroom at the front and other bedrooms at the back
- lean-to with a timber board ceiling
- kitchen in a lean-to with a cooking stove
- small scullery or washing up room next to the kitchen with a sink bench and some shelves for crockery
- house close to, or right on the street boundary
- garden at the rear and outhouses including wash house, privy and garden shed.



Hilditch House, Corner of Queen & Clarence St, Northcote, n.d. Northcote Library.



Findlay and Co's Illustrated Catalogue. No 2. Elevation of a five room cottage. Alexander Turnbull Library.

³ Books about house styles include Jeremy Salmond, *Old New Zealand Houses, 1800-1940* (Reed Methuen, Auckland, 1998) and Peter Shaw, *New Zealand Architecture* (Hodder, Moa Beckett, Auckland, 1997).

Villas

Villas evolved over half a century from small cottages to large rambling houses. Our older coastal suburbs are predominantly made up of villas, in particular bay villas which had a projecting room at the front. Larger villas had two bays at the front or a second one at the side joined to the front bay by a verandah. Villas have a hall in the middle running from the front to the back of the house with rooms on either side. The front of the house was highly decorated while the rear remained plain. The scullery and bathroom were in a lean-to at the rear and the toilet was outside in a small shed or wash house.⁴



*Highbury, Birkenhead Ave, c1895.
Birkenhead Library.*

early villas

Before 1880 the small villa was really a large cottage, usually four rooms with additional rooms in a lean-to. Grander villas had a projecting front room with a bay window. Some early villas were two-storeys and replaced the cottage characteristics of the attic room with dormer windows. Common features were:

- projecting front room with bay window
- chimney with different coloured bricks
- wood shingled or iron roof
- Gothic style or 'Carpenter Gothic' carvings
- carved bargeboards and tall sharp finials.



*"Proposed Alterations 20 Ann Street."
North Shore City Archives.*

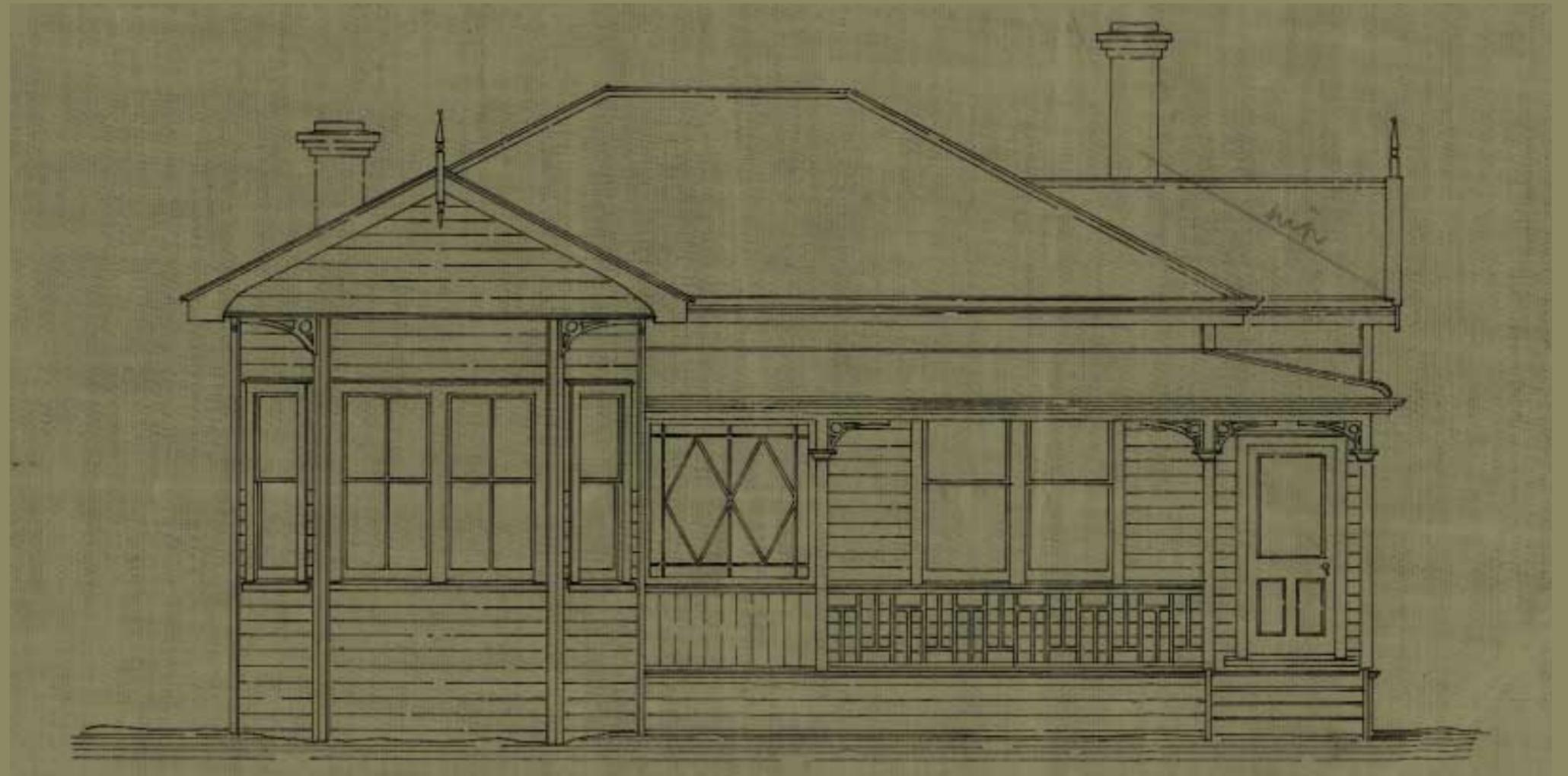
late Victorian villas

From the 1890s when the kauri milling industry was at its peak, many larger villas were built. They have since become some of the most sought-after older houses. Late Victorian villas were only slightly larger than the early villa but at their grandest, they were two or three-storeys with turrets, verandahs and the front of the house richly decorated. Common features were:

- decorative timber work
- etched or engraved colourful imported glass
- bullnose verandah roof.



*Patterson House, Maritime Tce, Birkenhead, n.d.
Birkenhead Library.*



*"Proposed New Residence 10 Hastings Parade, Devonport for Miss White."
Geo Banks, Builder. North Shore City Archives.*

⁴ For more information about villas, try *The New Zealand Villa, Past and Present* by Di Stewart (Viking, Auckland, 1992).

Villas



Home of Mr A. Brett, Northcote Rd, Takapuna, n.d.
Takapuna Library.

Edwardian villas

Around 1905, the extravagantly decorated Victorian villa gave way to a more restrained and elegant style, partly inspired by oriental decorative motifs. House plans became more complex with less emphasis on symmetry. The exterior changed with multiple bays at the front and on the sides. Common features were:

- corner turrets
- projecting front room with bay window and separate roof
- pyramid shaped or hip and gable also known as 'Dutch gable' roof
- fan or sunburst pattern joining posts and beams, and in the eaves' brackets
- pressed metal panels, fibrous plaster and leadlight windows
- balustrade and eaves' brackets featuring alternating spindles and plain sticks.



"Proposed plan for a villa for Mr Hampson,
Dominion Rd, Devonport."
R J Roberts, Architect. North Shore City Archives.

transitional villas

During the late 1900s villas began to adopt characteristics of the American Bungalow style. Inside, the layout was essentially the same as the villa. A lower roof pitch reduced the height of rooms and verandahs were incorporated into the main roof. Transitional villa doors had a single top panel and two to three lower vertical panels rather than a four panel door. Common features were:

- exposed rafters at the roof edge
- bargeboards or gable ends with simple patterns cut into the edges
- shingles common in the roof gable ends
- posts and verandahs tapered to the top
- balustrades with motifs cut like stencil patterns.



Residence of George & Alice Schollum, Byron Ave, Takapuna, 1914.
Takapuna Library.



"House in Calliope Rd (Devonport), for Mr F. A. Wharfe."
Edward Bartley, Architect. North Shore City Archives.

Bungalows

Between 1920 to 1930 bungalows became popular. Although the name originates from India, the bungalows we are familiar with evolved in California. These houses had low-pitched, sweeping roofs with deep, shady verandahs. Often the porch roof was an extension of the main gable roof. Their casual style was symbolic of the post war period and was copied from the American west through plan books and periodicals.⁵ Common features were:

- wide deep porches and large opening windows
- softer colours with natural materials and finishes
- front door at the side
- casement windows
- small entrance hall linked by large double doors to living rooms
- kitchen with built-in fittings and small breakfast nook.



House at 72 Kind Edward Ave, Bayswater, 1930s.
Takapuna Library.



House in Lake Rd, Belmont, 1940s.
Takapuna Library.



* FRONT VIEW *

"House at Hurst Ave [Ascot Ave], Devonport, for Mr Curtayne."
Jas R. Turnbull, Architect. North Shore City Archives.

⁵ For more information about bungalows read *The Bungalow in New Zealand* by Jeremy Ashford (Viking, Auckland, 1994).

3

Making changes

GETTING STARTED

There are few older houses well suited to the way we live today. House plans were restrictive, homes were not equipped for modern facilities and did not have good outdoor access. Changes will be and have been made to houses over time and this is all part of their history. What is important is retaining the character of the house. Altering or adding to old houses isn't always easy. Here are a few points to keep in mind.⁶

- Identify the important parts of your house that give it character.
- Think about the type of changes you would like and be clear about the purpose of the work. It is possible to make changes without spoiling the heritage qualities of the building.
- Look around for examples of changes that you think work for houses of the same period as yours. These might be elements that were originally built as part of a larger house or they may be later alterations that have been carried out successfully.
- Make a record of your house's present condition and record changes as they take place. Take photographs of spaces and details which you can refer to later. Note any early or original elements such as decoration or old traces of wallpaper.
- Consider seeking the advice of an architect to help with planning and the overall appearance. There are architects who are experienced in historic building work and we have a list which we are happy to provide.
- Provide enough room to meet your needs but be careful with the scale of changes.
- Try not to diminish the character of your home or alter the scale with big changes that could also cost you a lot of money.
- Arrange to store or recycle early building elements that you remove.



Harkin family outside their Huka Rd home, 1900. Birkenhead Library.



Frances and Essa Harkin outside the Harkin family home after it was altered by their father, 1910. Birkenhead Library.

4

Extending house types

Change is a natural part of a building's life and in many cases it adds to the building's charm. When considering an addition to your property take into account the impact the change will have on the neighbourhood character. If there is a consistent style of housing in the area it may influence how you decide to alter your house. There are two ways of adding to a house of a particular period or style:

IN THE STYLE OF THE PERIOD

Repeating original architectural elements, forms, proportions and joinery using the same materials and details is a good idea. Use existing features to make patterns for replacing decorative detail rather than buying a modern replica.



A gable bay addition identical to the existing bays was used to extend this house.

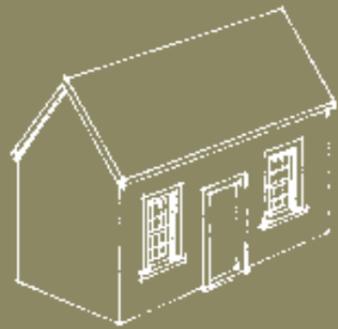
IN MODERN OR CONTEMPORARY STYLE

Designing extensions in a contemporary style is acceptable if scale, mass and proportion are taken into account. Good contemporary additions are difficult to achieve if the original elements are completely ignored. Continuity of some building elements such as cladding materials or building form such as the height of walls or slope of roof is important. However, incorporating period details in to a contemporary design is not a good idea.



A new design using similar forms and materials to the existing house was used to extend the rear of this home.

⁶ For information on the principles of altering your house read *Guidelines for Altering Heritage Buildings* by Chris Cochran (New Zealand Historic Places Trust, Wellington, 2000) or *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (US Department of the Interior, Washington DC, 1992). For information about conservation standards, try *ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value* (1993). These guidelines are available at North Shore City libraries.



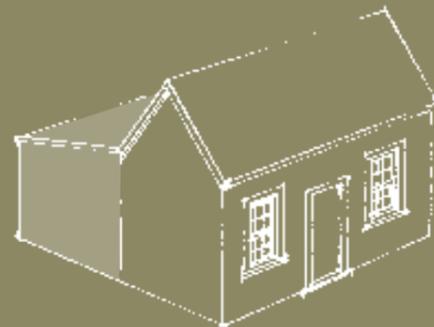
basic cottage



original cottage form repeated



roof space developed and dormer window added



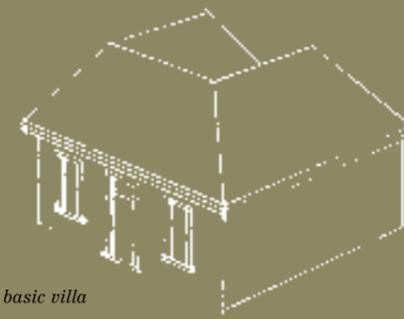
lean-to added



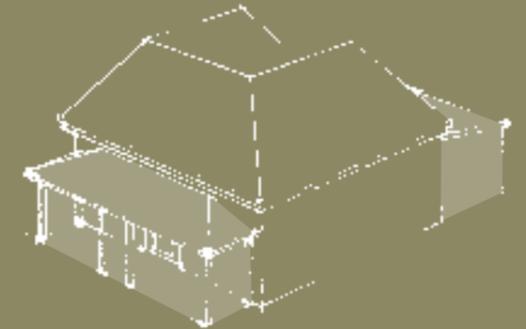
bay and verandah added

Cottages

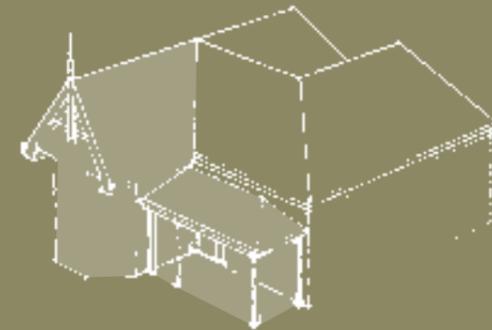
There is little scope for extending a cottage and any substantial addition could change the cottage's modest structure into a small villa. Consider leaving the present form of the house and adding a separate free-standing annexe. A lean-to or repeating the original house form will also provide extra space.



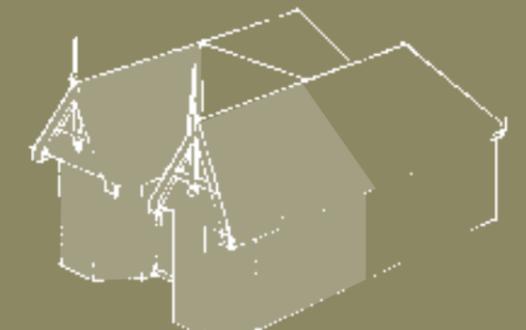
basic villa



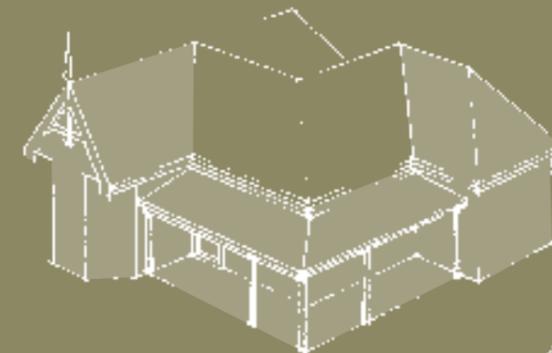
verandah and lean-to added



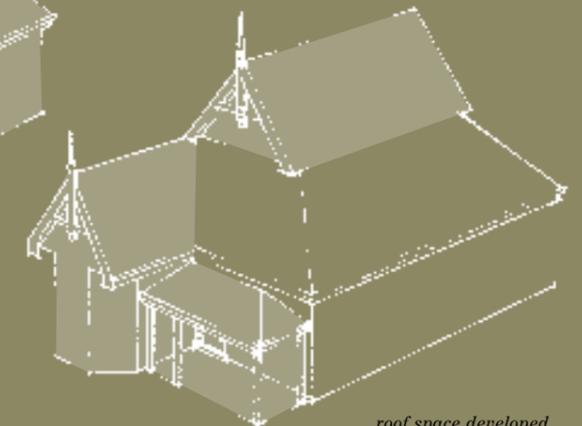
bay and verandah added



additional bay to match existing bay



return bay added and connected by a return verandah



roof space developed

Villas

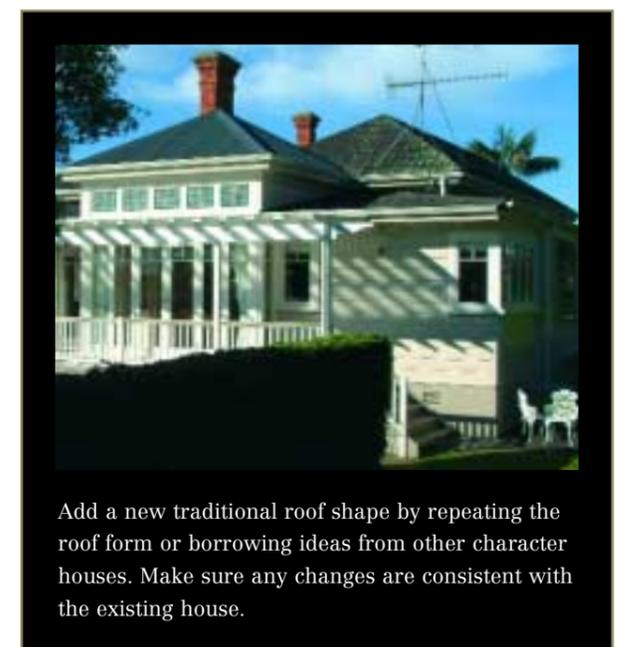
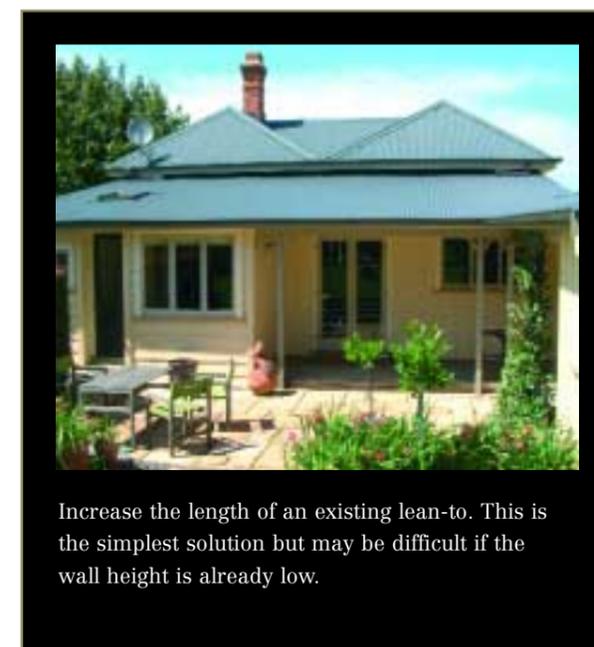
Adding to the rear, either as a lean-to or by continuing the existing roofline, is the best way to extend a villa. For bay villas, you can get more space by adding another gabled bay. If the roof has a central gutter it is possible to build an attic room in the roof.

5

Adding to building form

REAR

The rear of older houses was not as important architecturally as the front. Little emphasis was placed on good access between indoors and outdoors, and lean-tos were often poorly built as a result. Extending at the rear gives you the opportunity to improve access to your garden or private outdoor living space. Adding to the rear of heritage buildings is encouraged and restrictions are imposed on front and side additions in North Shore City's District Plan. There are various ways of extending at the rear although some may involve substantial building and reconstruction.



basic bungalow

roof space developed and dormer window added

bay window added

gable bays added

Bungalows

Altering or adding to bungalows is quite different from villas. The lower roof pitch and lack of symmetry means there is room for a greater range of changes which are in keeping with the informal character of the house.



Add a new non-traditional roof shape to evoke recognisable qualities of the original house. This solution is best left to trained architects and designers and is dependent on careful selection of materials and design of building details if it is to succeed.



Add a separate free-standing addition connected to the house by a small link or passageway. This is a good way of extending without affecting the character or building elements at the rear of the house.

SIDE

There are ways of adding to the side of the house but it's better to extend at the rear, as it will be less apparent from the front.



Extend the addition with a gable or a hip roof, similar to the existing roof. This will be a more expensive option.

A hip and gable roof that matched the existing roof was used to extend this house to the right of the chimney.



Make use of the rear lean-to which was part of every old house and extend its roof and connect a side verandah or porch with doors.



Add a full bay window to extend an existing room.

FRONT

The design and appearance of the front of a house adds to the street and neighbourhood character. It is one of the first things we see when looking at a property and can affect its market value. While it may be possible to add to the front of some older houses, this change can significantly affect a house's heritage qualities.



Reveal original character by removing later elements.



Reuse or return decorative detail you know was on the house. You may even find missing elements discarded under the house or in outhouses.



Add to the rear or side of the house to avoid changing the visual character of the house from the front.

A bay matching the front bay was added to the side of the house.



Use authentic architectural forms such as a new gable or a bay window to provide additional space, if you have to extend at the front.

A bay was added to the front room to provide extra space in this house.

ROOF

The roof is the main architectural feature of a house giving it its shape and profile. Altering the roofline of any house will change its character. The low profile of many roofs means that any first floor addition is likely to be high above the existing roof and will need to be carefully designed to minimise this extra height. Generally, popping the roof by adding an attic or upstairs room is not a good solution and will significantly change the roofline, damaging the overall appearance of the house. Adding another floor is relatively expensive and greatly changes the existing house. Think about where the stairs will go and how to replace the floor space that it will use.

Bear in mind age and style. The age of your house and its architectural style should be considered before making any changes.



This roof was reclad keeping the existing form.



Find good examples that have already been built. How would changes have been made when the house was built? Look for examples of houses of a similar age and style that have a second floor.



Keep the forms simple. The roofs of most older houses were uncomplicated or based on a simple shape and often repeated several times.

A new gable roof was added to this house.



Try to ensure the roof addition is not visible from the street. If you can't see it from the street, it is less likely to change the house's appearance and affect the character of the neighbourhood.



Consider the existing roof form and the way in which different parts intersect. It helps to understand the basic shape of the roof, whether hip, gable, lean-to, or a combination of these, and to use these shapes to create new roof elements.

A new gable was added to the existing roof by building within the roof valley on this house.

6 Altering the exterior: the small details

CONNECTING THE ADDITION TO THE EXISTING HOUSE

It's useful to be able to distinguish new additions from the existing house. This makes it clear which parts are old and which parts are new.



Use the right dormer windows. Often used in attic rooms, dormer windows differ from one style of house to another and were rarely used in villas. Tall narrow dormers were common in cottages. Bungalows had wider shallow dormers with either gable roofs or low-pitched lean-tos. These smaller windows let light in and complemented the style of the house.



Think about the scale and shape of the roof. 'Popped' tops will alter the basic form of the roof. Roof changes should be avoided unless it is clear that this is the way they were traditionally extended.

A new dormer was added to the roof to retain its scale and shape. Anything larger would significantly alter the appearance of this house.



Find out what can and can't be done. Height controls in some areas may limit the options for extending upwards. We can advise you if some older houses are too high to allow for roof additions.

The height of this house would exceed current height restrictions and make it difficult to extend at the existing roof height.



Ensure the addition is smaller in scale or has a lower roof height than the main house.



Try to show where the new addition begins by having a new wall set back or protruding from the existing walls.

A new addition was set back from the existing façade to maintain the scale of this building.



Use a detail such as a small flat roof to link the new roof with the old.

A simple roof on this glazed link connects and differentiates the two parts of this house.

WINDOWS AND DOORS

Exterior window and door joinery is one of the clues to the age of a house. Joinery details have changed over time and a house can look odd if joinery from another period is used or if modern materials with different proportions are used.

Windows and doors are an important part of a house's architecture. Doors have similar details to windows but the front door is often rather grand and sometimes quite elaborate, perhaps with small coloured windows alongside. In some houses the doors may have had decorative glass panels.

Bay windows are generally 'box' or 'bow' shaped. They have their own roof and a contrasting material such as wooden shingles used on the wall beneath the sill. Most bay windows were factory produced and can often be found in demolition yards. Make sure you choose a bay window that matches the period of your house.



Consider installing French doors that are of a similar period or profile to other joinery.



Reduce the visual impact of larger windows and doors by containing them under a verandah which will also provide shelter from bad weather.



Use larger glazed openings at the rear of the house with proportions similar to those of existing windows or doors.

The glazing bars match the pattern of the existing windows on this house.



Bay windows are a good way of allowing light in and providing extra space in rooms where any greater change will affect the character of the house.

The bay window on this house was enlarged to provide extra room.

VERANDAHS

Verandah roofs on villas and cottages are single pitch and start below the main roof spouting, often giving the impression that the house is larger than it actually is. There are many types of villa verandah and they are usually located at the front of the house providing sheltered access to the front door. On larger houses, verandahs continued along the side of the house with a specially-formed roof over the front steps.

The bungalow porch was an integral part of the main house rather than a secondary element, although its roof was sometimes lower. It was generally much deeper than the villa verandah and could be used as an open air bedroom. The porch was more private than the verandah and was not always at the front of the house.

Many verandahs have been lost or enclosed over time.



Build a plain verandah if it's not clear how your verandah looked.



Reinstate the details only if you know what the original elements were like.



Replace later windows with glazed verandah panels common to the style of the building.

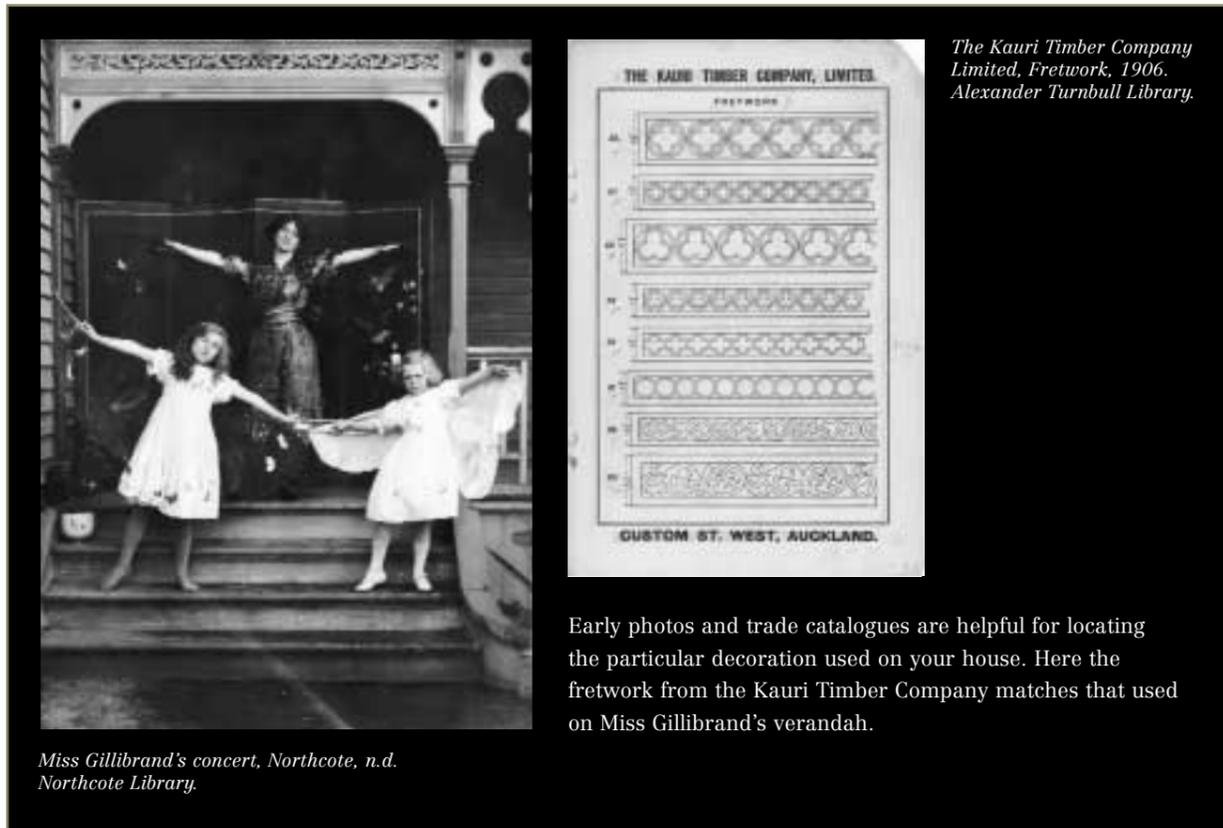
MATERIALS

Small details are important when altering a house. Windows, doors, porch details and decorative features should be compatible with the period and style of the house. Borrowing from other styles is not recommended. Using existing or matching construction materials can help you achieve an addition that complements the house.

DECORATION

The most elaborate decoration was used at the front of the house while, at the rear of the property, cheaper and simpler mouldings were used. These mouldings were an economical way of covering joints between materials, elements such as walls and roofs, and openings such as windows. Fretwork, cast iron decoration and coloured glass were generally only used on the front, where they could be seen from the street.

Adding decoration to the house may make it visually attractive but is no substitute for getting the proportion and form of the alterations right in the first place.⁷



The Kauri Timber Company Limited, Fretwork, 1906. Alexander Turnbull Library.

Early photos and trade catalogues are helpful for locating the particular decoration used on your house. Here the fretwork from the Kauri Timber Company matches that used on Miss Gillibrand's verandah.

Miss Gillibrand's concert, Northcote, n.d. Northcote Library.

FINISHES

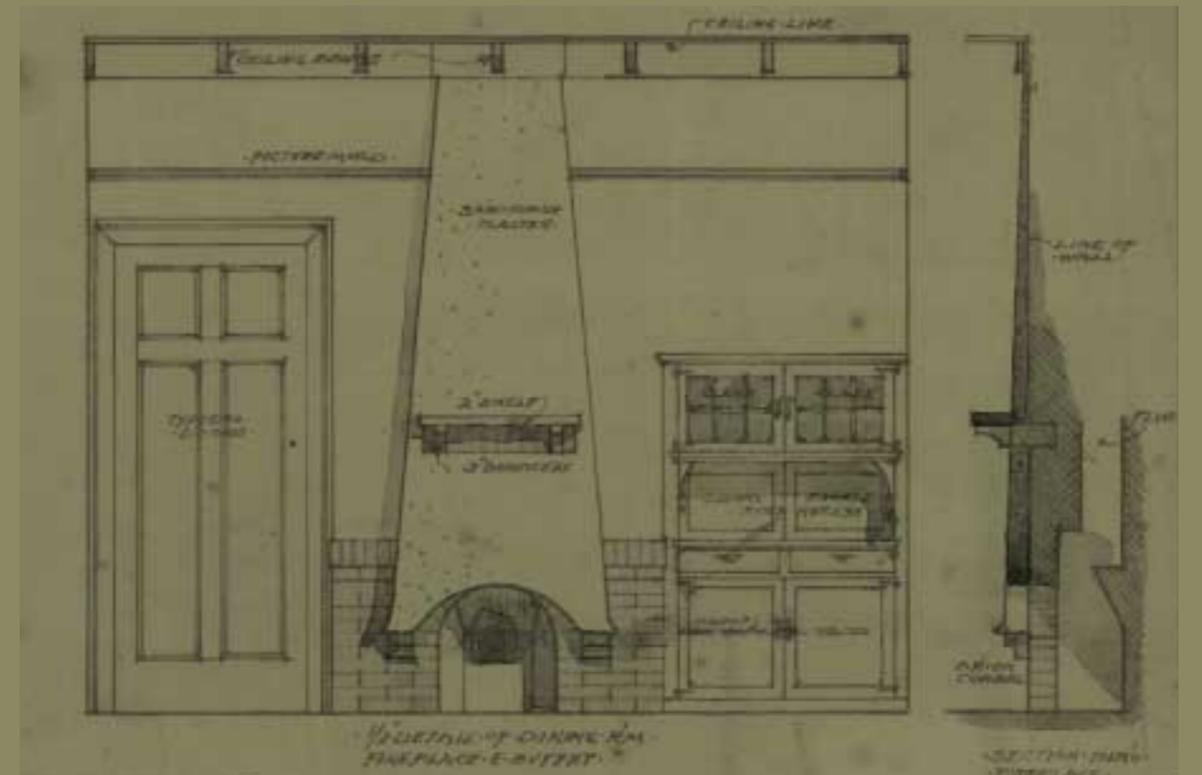
Colour schemes should be appropriate to the style of your house. It's often helpful to find out which colours were originally used. Different features would often be painted using various colours. Black and white photos can show which parts of the house were painted in contrasting colours. By carefully scraping through the layers of paint in a remote place such as under window sills or roof eaves you can easily find out which colours were used on the original house. Match the colours on a modern paint chart. Paint companies can now produce almost any colour and have sophisticated ways of matching a colour. They have many colours in their standard range and some even have a 'heritage' colour range.

⁷ Early timber trade catalogues including the Kauri Timber Company Timber Catalogue of the 1900s can be found at North Shore City libraries. These catalogues can give you information about pre-cut timber decoration, available at the beginning of the twentieth century.

7 Inside the house

Often exterior alterations will affect the interior, so keep this in mind when making changes. The inside is often the first thing to be changed, and character can easily be lost.

- Keep the layout and structural form of the most important areas of the house
- Retain elements of the original layout by making a large door opening rather than removing a whole wall
- Avoid lowering original ceilings for new floors upstairs
- Retain skirtings, architraves and other mouldings to preserve the interior character
- Retain original fireplaces, doors and door hardware if they are still in place
- Investigate early colour schemes and keep samples of wallpaper you find
- Retain redundant elements like electrical pipe conduit as it is possible to rewire within these
- Hide new wiring and fittings.



"Residence for C. St. Julian esq., Devonport". T. C. Mullions Architect. North Shore City Archives.

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Outside the house

GARAGES

Most garages were added later where there was space. Many garages were at the side or in the front yard and although some of these obscure the house, they follow a common pattern. Early car shelters were simple unadorned structures. As a general principle, garages are less visually complex than the main house. They do not have to look the same as the house and may have a style of their own that complements the character of the house.



Keep the garage free-standing and use a complementary design to link it to the house.



Consider a carport rather than a fully enclosed garage if parking is only possible in the front yard.



Make the garage as low and inconspicuous as possible.



Integrate the design with fences or other landscape features.



Avoid obscuring the house – a carport may be better than a garage.

Use similar materials to those of the house.



Where the garage is in a side yard consider whether it needs to be attached to the house or separate. If attached, make sure the front of the garage is at least 600mm back from the front of the house.

OUTBUILDINGS

The smaller sheds and outhouses which have always been a feature of the urban house section were rarely, if ever, finished like the house.



*Gum shed where Joe Sheriff stored gum.
Located at the rear of the house, n.d.
Takapuna Library.*



Try not to construct or decorate outbuildings as if they are small houses or by using features that have been used on the main house.

FENCES AND GATES

Fences can enhance the appearance of your property. Old fences varied according to location, available materials and current fashion. Until about 1910, plain boards were used on side and rear boundaries while picket fences were used at the front. Over time, many picket fences disappeared inside hedges of various species. At the height of the villa style, factories produced many picket fence designs which could be combined with a choice of gates and gate posts. Last century (1900s) crinkle wire fence and gates became popular. After World War I post and wire fences were common with a heavy wooden top rail. In volcanic areas dry stone walls were used, as well as stones set in mortar. Brick houses usually had a matching street wall with plastered capping to posts and wall. High walls may appear to offer more privacy but shut out the street and can be a target for intruders.



Crinkle wire fence



Post and wire fence

Look at the types of fences and hedges in your neighbourhood and how they were designed and built.



Try to use low fences or hedges which are visually attractive and blend into the neighbourhood.



Try to find old photos that show the original fence on your property to help replace or add a new one.

Forgham's house, Onewa Road, n.d. Birkenhead Library.

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New houses in heritage areas

If you are considering building a new house in a heritage area, think about the character and special qualities of the area that initially attracted you to it. Make sure you maintain that character when you build your new house. There are no hard and fast rules for new buildings, a lot depends on the designer's ability to plan a house that fits in and complements the neighbourhood character.



Try to position the house so it follows neighbourhood patterns.

The house on the left was designed to reflect the architectural forms of the house next door.



Try to use building materials and construction methods common to the street or area. It is surprising how well a modern or different style building can fit in if it is constructed with the same materials.



Try to build in a style that reflects the neighbourhood character.