

# Alterations & Additions to Heritage Dwellings

## September 2010

### **Guidance for Alterations and Additions**

The intention of Heritage Overlay controls is to ensure that alterations and additions to heritage places do not adversely affect their significance, character and appearance. The following notes provide guidance on appropriate approaches for alterations and additions to houses in Heritage Overlay areas. In particular, these notes are designed to assist with additions to single-storey houses on smaller blocks.

The Cultural Heritage Policy, Clause 22.11 of the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme, should be referred to for the specific design characteristics, policy basis and objectives of the relevant Heritage Overlay covering the subject site. The impacts from and to neighbouring properties covered by a Heritage Overlay should also be considered.

These notes are based on Heritage Victoria's 'The Heritage Overlay Guidelines' (2007) and are illustrated with examples from the City of Maribyrnong.

### **General Form of Proposed Additions**

It should be noted that there is no 'one size fits all' solution to designing additions to places within heritage overlays. All sites offer different opportunities and constraints with regards to the size of the allotment, the design brief for the addition and potential visibility of the proposed addition.

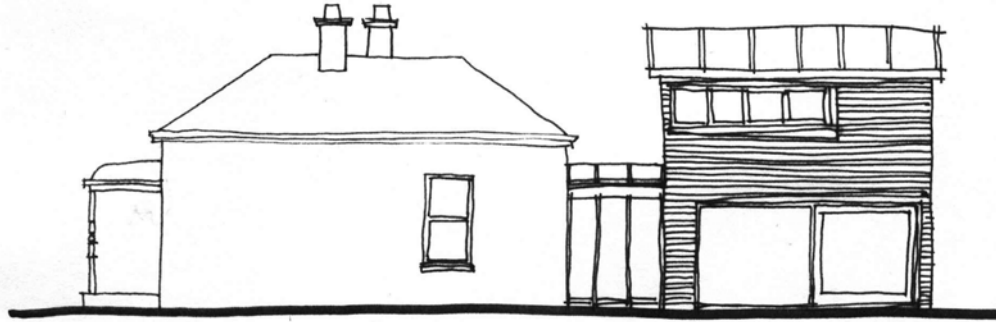
- Many problems arise when the size of the proposed addition is too big to be sensitively accommodated on a site. An issue to be considered is the size of the proposed addition. How many rooms do you want? How big are the rooms needed to be? Where can the addition be sited on the block? A smaller well-designed addition can often meet your expectations for an extension without impacting on the heritage significance of the place and is generally a better solution. Carefully consider the design brief; are there any opportunities to re-think what is needed and reduce the size of the addition?
- Additions should be sited and scaled to ensure the prominences of the significant parts of a heritage place are retained. This usually refers to the front, sides and roof form of the house as seen from the public realm.

- Council encourages high quality contemporary design; however, new additions should be undertaken in a sympathetic style. The addition should be identifiable as a 21st Century change, but it should not be so distinctive that it takes attention away from the original house.



**GOOD EXAMPLE:** The roof form to the rear is distinctive from the original design and is contemporary in design. But it is not so distinctive that it takes attention away from the original house, and the scale is appropriate.

- It is preferable to have some visual separation and distinction from the original building form in the proposed design. Either a low-level link or recess in plan form is good ways of achieving this.
- When additions are proposed, any necessary works to repair or reinstate original features to the front of the house, such as verandah posts, should be undertaken at the same time. This enhances the quality of the heritage place and is encouraged. However all changes should be based on sound physical or photographic evidence. Seek advice from the Heritage Advisor to discuss the detail of repair and reconstruction works to heritage places.
- Neighbouring properties in Heritage Overlays should also be considered and an addition should not overwhelm an adjoining or adjacent building.



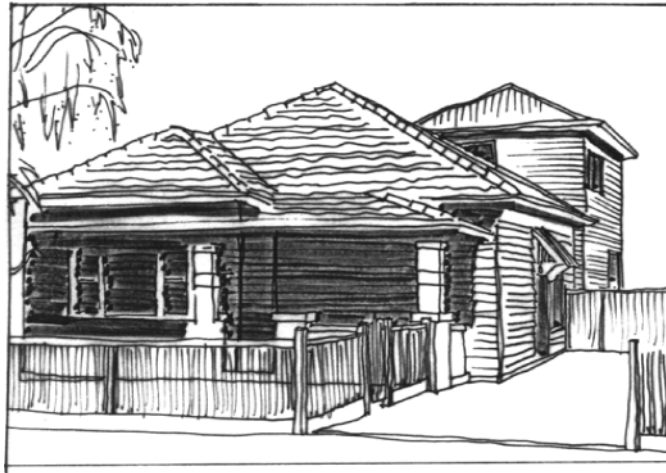
**GOOD EXAMPLE:** A low-level glazed link between an older house and new addition. Also note how lower ceiling levels can reduce the height and bulk of the addition.

### Scale of Proposed Addition

- The scale of the addition should respond to the existing house and should not dominate in terms of bulk.
- Reducing the ceiling heights of additions can reduce the height, and therefore the bulk of additions.



**WHAT TO AVOID:** Additions that are of a scale which dominate the original house.



**GOOD EXAMPLE:** The addition is set back behind the original house and the scale does not dominate.

## Roof Form

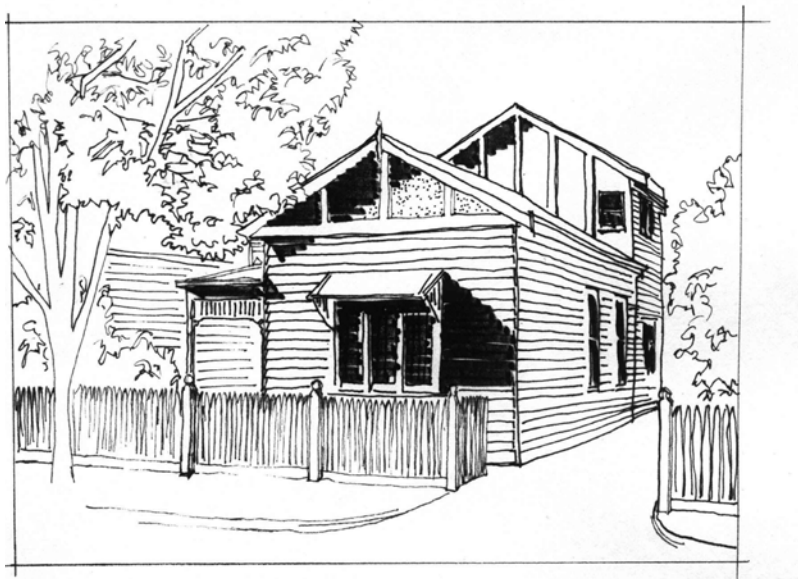
- The original roof form, as seen from the public domain, should be maintained. This means that ridges, hips and gables at the front of the house should not be altered to accommodate an extension.
- Hipped, flat and skillion roof forms, when used for additions, are usually less visually dominant than gabled roof forms.
- It is preferable that the original roof form is not simply extended, so that the old is separated from the new. But this may be acceptable in certain situations, such as where space is restrictive and where the extension cannot be seen from the public domain. Seek advice from Planning Officers and the Heritage Advisor.



**WHAT TO AVOID:** The addition is built in front of the main ridge/apex and changes the original roof form.

## Detailing the Addition

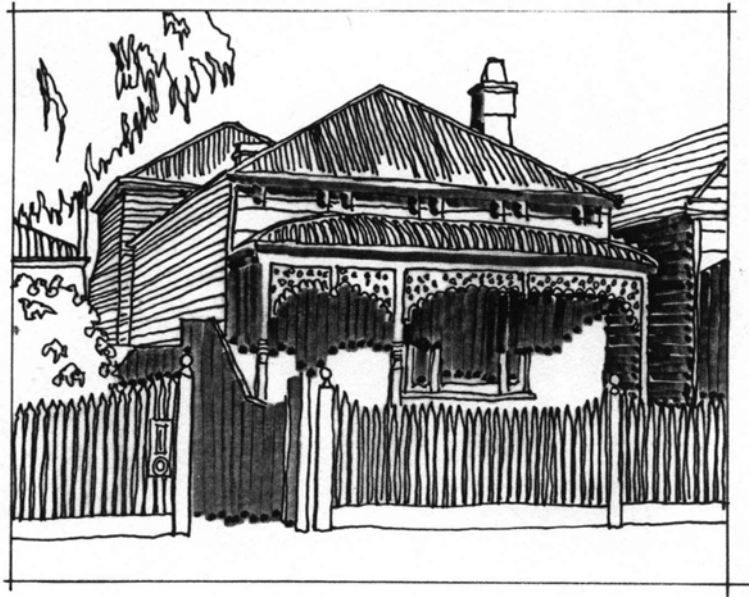
- Original chimneys, particularly those that are visible from the public domain, should be retained.
- There should be no replication of period details, such as decorative gables or finials, on the new addition. Alterations and additions which copy historic styles misrepresent the history of the building and can create confusion.



**WHAT TO AVOID:** Replicating period details. The double-storey extension mimics the original gable infill on the front of the house.

## Building Materials

- Where the original roof is to be replaced it should be undertaken in the same materials or the appropriate material for the period of the heritage place where the original has been previously altered. For example, metal roofs should be replaced with galvanised corrugated roof sheeting, not Colorbond® or Zinalume® and terracotta tiled roofs should be replaced with the same.
- The building materials of the new addition should be the same or similar to the original, particularly with regard to the status (e.g. modest or grand) of the original house. For instance, brick additions are not appropriate to a weatherboard house, but a corrugated sheet addition would be appropriate. Subtle material differences or paint colours can help to differentiate the old from the new.



**GOOD EXAMPLE** This is an excellent example of a double-storey addition that can barely be seen from the street.

- The side setbacks have been retained and the design retains the original roof form and the original chimneys.
- A single-storey, flat-roofed link provides an excellent buffer between the old and the new.
- The new addition has a hipped roof, which is less prominent than a gabled roof and minimises its visibility.
- The new windows are timber-framed, like the original, but are differentiated by square proportions as being contemporary. Skylights introduce more daylight into the addition in a subtle way.

### **Further Advise**

For further advise on planning an extension in a heritage area please contact the Urban Planning Department **Phone:** 9688 0253 **Email:** email@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au  
[www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au](http://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au)

### **Website Links**

For further information on heritage and planning please visit the following internet sites  
[www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/heritage/Forms-and-Guidelines/heritage-overlay-guidelines](http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/heritage/Forms-and-Guidelines/heritage-overlay-guidelines)  
[www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.asp?Page\\_Id=1180&h=-1&p=1](http://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.asp?Page_Id=1180&h=-1&p=1)  
[www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Page/page.asp?Page\\_Id=1187&h=0](http://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Page/page.asp?Page_Id=1187&h=0)