HERITAGE CONSERVATION

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ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS

DENR

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

City of Adelaide

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DEH Information Line (08) 8204 1910
Website www.environment.sa.gov.au
Email dehinformation@saugov.sa.gov.au

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ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS
The South Australian perspective

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1 INTRODUCTION

All buildings, including heritage buildings, need ongoing care and maintenance, which will usually only occur if the buildings are actively used and valued by their owners. Finding an appropriate use for a heritage building is a key factor in its conservation. The ideal use is one that fits in well with the building's existing character, setting and internal arrangement.

To accommodate new uses and to meet contemporary needs it is often necessary to alter, adapt or add to buildings. Heritage buildings can be changed provided the elements that give the building its heritage value are not destroyed or compromised in the process.

This distinctive new entrance to the Norwood Town Hall has improved access and fire egress. Along with conservation work and new services, this has made an under-utilised hall into a viable, modern concert venue.

Why have design guidelines?

The purpose of these guidelines is to promote a better understanding of the design issues and possibilities presented by heritage buildings. Many heritage buildings in the past have been compromised by ad hoc and ill-considered alterations and additions. The guidelines aim to assist owners, architects and designers plan and design alterations or additions that will complement rather than compromise the heritage value of their buildings.

Ad hoc additions and unsympathetic reroofing have largely concealed this house constructed of dolomite.

Using the guidelines

This booklet sets out conservation principles, advice on planning a project, and design guidelines for altering and adapting heritage buildings. It provides a framework for understanding the conservation issues involved when making design decisions in relation to heritage buildings.

The guidelines illustrate best practice and provide guidance on major and minor alterations, and external and internal adaptation.

Every design challenge is unique and requires an individual response to enable an appropriate and cost effective design solution. It is often wise to consult a specialist such as an architect experienced in heritage work.

Where do the guidelines apply?

These guidelines apply to buildings of national, State and local heritage significance. However, they also provide an understanding of basic design principles, and are therefore useful in considering adaptation or alterations to other buildings that are not officially recognised or protected.

2. CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

The Burra Charter

Principles for the conservation of historic places are set out in the Burra Charter. The Burra Charter also outlines the processes for the understanding, investigation and management of significant places.

The following definitions contained in the Burra Charter are useful in understanding the design principles discussed in more detail in this document:

Article 1.9: *Adaptation* means modifying a place to suit proposed compatible uses.

Article 1.10: *Compatible use* means a use that involves no change to the culturally significant fabric, changes that are substantially reversible, or changes that require minimal impact.

Article 6: The conservation policy appropriate to a place must first be determined by an understanding of its cultural significance.

Article 7: The conservation policy will determine which uses are compatible.

Article 20: *Adaptation* is acceptable where the conservation of the place cannot otherwise be achieved, and where adaptation does not substantially detract from its cultural significance.

Article 21: *Adaptation* must be limited to that which is essential to a use for the place determined in accordance with Articles 6 and 7.

Cultural significance

Cultural significance is described in Article 1.2 of the Burra Charter as "the aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations".

There is clearly a need to understand why a place is important before making decisions on its future use or alteration.

Over time

Over time most buildings undergo changes of use and may be altered to suit the new uses. These changes can contribute to the value of a place and assist in the understanding of our past.

Alterations and additions made to suit contemporary uses become part of the history of the building over time, and provide evidence of our social and cultural values to future generations.

The various stone additions to this hipped roof, timber framed cottage in Robe provide clear evidence of the changing needs and aspirations of past owners.

These additions to a stone cottage in Goolwa follow traditional practice and forms but are clearly contemporary.

General principles for conservation

Minimise changes

Retain as much as possible of the original fabric of the building, minimising disturbance to the significant parts.

Make changes reversible

Where possible, incorporate change in a way that is reversible, as this leaves open the possibility of future restoration to the original condition.

Unsympathetic "improvements" have concealed but not destroyed the original facades of the Beehive Corner, Adelaide. These changes should not have occurred in the first place – they are at least reversible.

Maintain evidence of age

Over time, buildings are subject to wear and tear and their surfaces take on a patina of age. Good conservation practice does not require restoring a building to as-new condition.

Previous work

It is rare to find a building that has not been modified to some degree over time to better accommodate the occupant's requirements. Often these modifications assume an importance in themselves and demonstrate the growth and history of the place. Before removing previous work it is important to consider its contribution to the history of the place.

These bricks at the former Grote Street Model School, Adelaide, record the wear of many boys' hobnail boots.

Distinguish between new and old

Good practice clearly distinguishes new work from the original.

Additions and alterations that seek to replicate or imitate the materials, details, elements or the entire original building can confuse and detract from its historical integrity and uniqueness. For example, avoid the use of tumbled bricks, small pane windows, brick quoins or materials salvaged from other buildings.

Similarly, avoid conjectural reconstruction – adding what might have once been part of the building but for which insufficient evidence exists to indicate conclusively the former design.

Additions to the Frome Street Stables in Adelaide respond to the traditional form but with modern materials and expression. There is no confusion between new and old.

3. PLANNING A PROJECT

Approvals

Before planning any work, it is best to discuss early ideas with the local council to determine what requirements may apply and whether assistance can be provided.

Advice is best obtained when a project is being planned rather than after the design has been finalised. This will avoid wasted design work or the need for later changes and often expedites the approval process.

Any work affecting State heritage places will require development approval in accordance with the *Development Act 1993*. The definition of development includes painting, repairs and alterations as well as structural changes and additions. A new building adjacent to a heritage place is deemed to affect its setting and will be assessed for its impact on the heritage place.

Once the nature of a proposal has been internally agreed with the council and/or the State Heritage Branch, a well documented Development Application needs to be lodged with the local council. The application will be referred by the local council to a conservation architect from the State Heritage Branch or the council's heritage adviser.

Changes of use, land division and any demolition will also require local council approval. Alterations and additions to local heritage places may also require development approval.

This 1967 addition to the State Library showed little regard for its heritage value. Changed community attitudes would prevent such mistakes today.

Making decisions

Making decisions appropriate to a heritage building involves a number of steps. For a large, highly significant or complex place these steps can be represented in a Conservation Plan. It is also desirable that a similar, although simplified, process be followed when considering minor alterations or minor repairs.

Understanding significance

The first step in planning a project is to understand the significance of the place. This may involve historical research and investigation of the building itself. This research should answer questions such as:

- Why, how and when did the building develop?
- Which parts are important, and which parts are of lesser or no significance?
- Why are they important?
- Are just one or two interior spaces or their finishes significant?
- Is the setting or streetscape important?
- Is the integrity of the whole place – from garden to outbuildings through to furnishings and fittings – unique and significant?

Heritage value can be attributed in many ways. For example:

- historical importance, association with an event, persons or activity;
- architectural qualities, design, style, external form and internal appearance, or designed by a prominent architect;
- environmental qualities, its relationship and contribution to a streetscape or landscape.

The State Heritage Branch or heritage advisers from local councils can offer advice on this important aspect.

Developing a conservation policy

The second step in planning a project is to develop a conservation policy and strategy in order to identify and prioritise the conservation work required.

Urgent repairs to the original building should have the highest priority. Spending all available money on a new addition while allowing the historic building to deteriorate defeats the objective of conservation.

It is necessary to identify the highly significant parts of the place that should remain unchanged, as well as parts of lesser significance that could be adapted for a compatible use. It is also important to identify the curtilage, or open space, around a building that is required to maintain the proper setting.

Assessing the proposed use

The third step in planning a project is to assess the accommodation, functions, circulation and service requirements of the proposed use and represent these in a preliminary design. This step identifies areas where the proposal impacts on the significance of the heritage building and where there are conflicts with the conservation policy. The proposed uses and changes can then be modified so they meet the conservation policy, rather than changing the policy to suit the use.

Where a proposed use cannot meet the conservation objectives, it is by definition an incompatible use. In the case of a highly significant place – for example, a State Heritage place – such a use would be unacceptable.

Design and documentation

Once appropriate uses have been identified, the fourth step in planning a project is to prepare appropriate designs and develop suitable conservation techniques. Standard building practices may not be appropriate with heritage buildings and special techniques may need to be developed.

Construction

The final step in planning a project is construction. It is important that builders and tradespeople understand and comply with the conservation objectives and specification. Preference should be given to experienced tradespeople with an empathy for old buildings and possessing good on-site management and contractual skills.

For more complex projects it may be worth employing a consultant experienced in heritage conservation to ensure that tradespeople comply with conservation principles.

Building rules

Many heritage buildings do not comply with current building rules, particularly in relation to the requirements for fire resistance and egress. This becomes particularly important when new commercial or mixed uses are proposed. Rather than irreversibly damaging a heritage building to meet current standards, alternative ways of meeting performance objectives should be considered.

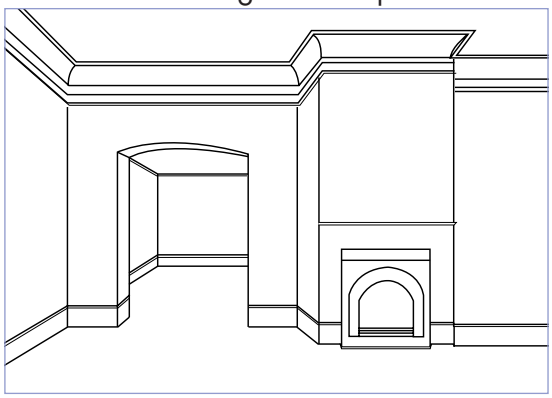
4. GUIDELINES FOR INTERIOR ADAPTATION

Uses that fit well into the existing spaces and layout of rooms will minimise the need for changes. Significant interior spaces such as front rooms and hallways are best left unaltered wherever possible to minimise interference to the original fabric and finishes. It is best not to partition rooms or lower ceilings, as this changes the room proportions and character and interferes with their details.

Room layout

Retaining the original room layout and circulation pattern is desirable as these contribute to the understanding of the building.

New access between rooms can be achieved by forming new openings if this does not unacceptably compromise the heritage value of the building. Simple openings that retain evidence of the original wall, rather than total removal of the wall, help to retain the idea of the original floor plan.



When forming new openings in internal walls, the presence of an original wall can be shown by retaining nibs rather than removing the wall completely.

Buildings built with rubble masonry rely on cross walls and corners for structural stability. In these buildings, new openings near corners, windows or doors may weaken the building's structure. It is better to locate new openings away from these elements to maintain the structural integrity of the building.

In old hotels, for example, the public areas traditionally consisted of several small rooms. Over the years, the intermediate walls may have been successively removed to create a single larger bar area in line with modern hospitality practice, thereby removing internal supporting walls and changing the structural integrity of the building.

Doors and windows

If doors or windows are no longer required they can be simply closed and locked. If a more permanent modification is required, plasterboard may be fixed to cover the opening wherever possible, leaving the original elements in place. Any original fabric that is removed should be labelled and kept in safe storage on the site to allow for future reinstatement.

A contemporary aluminium door provides a secure airlock to this stairway. It does not intrude because it does not compete with the original Victorian detailing. Oxford Hotel, North Adelaide.

Floors

Floors may be of a variety of materials including stone, terrazzo, timber or compacted earth. Wherever possible, retain original floors and carry out repairs to match the existing materials and details. When repairing or extending timber floors try to match the original timber species and board sizes.

New concrete floors are often specified for service areas such as bathrooms or laundries. However, when they are placed on fill they tend to retain soil moisture and can bridge the building's damp course – this is one of the most common causes of rising damp in internal walls. Concrete slabs can also block or impair sub-floor ventilation, thus encouraging dampness, rot and termites in adjacent timber floors. A suspended timber or cement sheet floor is an appropriate alternative to a concrete slab.

It is better not to construct a concrete slab in barns or outbuildings that have earth floors. Surfaces that breathe, such as brick or concrete block unit paving laid on a sand bed, are best as they allow the soil to dry out at the base of walls.

Ceilings

Original timber, pressed metal or lath and plaster ceilings, ceiling roses, panels, cornices and vents are characteristic of many old buildings, and these features add much to the character and appeal of heritage buildings.

Flush plasterboard ceilings impart a newer, and often inappropriate, character and should be used only where the original ceiling is beyond repair.

Reproduction or modern cornices and roses are also inappropriate in rooms originally having plain ceilings. Bulkheads or ceilings dropped to conceal services are also not characteristic of historic buildings and alter the physical proportions and spatial qualities of rooms.

Painting and colours

Original finishes, such as wallpaper, polished timber, marbling or graining contribute to the significance of a building.

Redecoration with colours and finishes similar to the original is one way to re-establish the original character. Original finishes can usually be determined by carefully scraping through subsequent paint layers with a sharp blade in an inconspicuous location. Some wallpaper finishes can be seen in relief beneath layers of paint.

A simplified or unobtrusive colour scheme often results in the most appropriate solution.

Electrical

New wiring is best concealed within wall, floor or ceiling cavities, or behind built-in furniture, skirtings and architraves if these do not have to be removed. Chasing of walls may damage original finishes and fragile plaster with the subsequent reinstatement work often remaining evident if not carried out very carefully.

Where wiring is located under the floors, power outlets can be located on, or just above, the skirting. The use of pull cord switches installed in ceilings reduces the need for chasing of walls and is often a better solution. Exposed conduits may also be used if no other alternative exists.

Some original wiring installations such as trough and cable can be dangerous. In cases where the wiring is culturally significant, the electricity supply should be deactivated, the original wiring retained and an alternative safe supply installed.

Lighting

Light fittings often centre attention in a room. It is best to retain original electrical fittings if they are safe. If new fittings are used, choose ones that are simple in design and unobtrusive when installed. Replica or imitation heritage light fittings sometimes look out of place and contemporary fittings of good design are often more appropriate.

Low levels of lighting were typical of older buildings but may not be appropriate for all uses. Lighting levels can be supplemented by concealed or unobtrusive surface lights if they do not interfere with the historic fabric.

Plumbing

It is often better to group service areas to minimise the impact of interior and exterior pipework.

In particular, avoid floor traps protruding into the room below from upper floors or the need for pipes to be exposed on external walls. Also avoid work that requires the removal of existing flooring or other significant disturbance to the building fabric.

Fire hydrants and hose reels can be intrusive if not carefully located or concealed.

Heating and cooling

There are many ways to heat and cool buildings. It may be appropriate to provide heating and cooling to some individual rooms rather than servicing the whole building.

Radiant or floor heating is a cost-effective and comfortable method of warming large spaces.
Ducted air-conditioning systems can often be concealed in ceiling spaces or below the floor, and disused chimneys used for return air ducts.

Split system reverse cycle air-conditioning, that uses an external heat pump and an internal console, avoids the need for ducting and minimises the size of openings for pipework.

Consoles, outlet registers, and grilles can be located unobtrusively to minimise damage. Ceiling registers, for example, are inappropriate in rooms with decorative ceilings.

Older building elements sometimes respond poorly to sudden changes in temperature or relative humidity. Changes in the air moisture content or room temperature by heating or cooling, for example, can distort timber work or affect the adhesion of plaster and finishes.

5. GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS

It is better to minimise changes to the external appearance of heritage buildings to ensure the original proportions and character of the buildings are maintained. Where changes are necessary, confine these to facades, walls or roof surfaces that are concealed from general view or are of least significance.

Walls

Retain original surface features such as stucco or masonry pointing where they contribute to the character of the building. When making masonry repairs or repointing, use a soft lime mortar mix batched to replicate the original in terms of strength, colour and texture. If the original mix is not suitable, restrict the strength of the mortar mix to 1 part cement ; 3 parts lime to 12 parts sand.

Where external walls become internal walls as part of alterations, retain and expose the original surface finish if possible. If walls must be covered it is better to batten these and dry line with plasterboard to minimise the risk of damage to the original material. Other decorative wall features such as plinths and rustic stone work should be retained behind flush plaster board rather than removed.

Locate fastenings to face stone or brickwork in mortar joints to prevent damage to the original material. Never chase or groove stone or brick faces for flashings or service conduits. Parapet or party walls that are visible should be well pointed and maintained to shed water, rather than being encased in sheet metal.

Modern paints differ considerably from those originally used on historic buildings. Acrylic paints that form an impervious skin damage old masonry walls, which rely on surface finishes to breathe and release moisture. It is better to use traditional finishes, such as limewash, which allow walls to breathe.

Further information on repairs to masonry walls can be obtained from the State Heritage Branch and from other heritage practice notes available through the Environment and Natural Resources Information Centre.

Doors and windows

Simply close and lock external doors or windows where they are no longer required. If permanent closure is necessary, openings can be covered over with a solid material recessed to a depth of around 50 mm. This traditional technique of creating a blind opening ensures that the evidence of the original opening remains visible, but unobtrusive, and that the opening can be reinstated at a future date. It is preferable to leave the original doors or windows in place behind the infill.

New openings in existing external walls for windows or doors should be kept to a minimun and restricted to rear or side facades if possible. New openings can be designed to be distinguishable from the original.

Door and window frames should be of similar materials and appearance to the existing. Reflective or tinted glass should be avoided.

Roofs

Roofs are an important element in the overall form and character of most buildings. Retain the original roof form and details such as finials, louvred gables, rainwater heads, dormer windows and skylights, vents and lanterns, chimneys and parapet walls. Where missing, these elements can be reconstructed if enough evidence of the original forms can be found.

Extensions into the roof space should not alter the visible roof form. For example, the addition of dormers where none previously existed dramatically alters the character of a building.

The character of this cottage has been compromised by an unsympathetic roof extension and by new windows that are horizontal rather than vertical in proportion.

When selecting roofing materials it is important to match the original in respect to colour, profile, material and texture. Unpainted galvanised corrugated iron is a suitable traditional material that rapidly weathers to an earthy grey. On the other hand, unpainted zincalume remains bright and reflects glare. Some traditional roofing techniques such as soldering cannot be used with zincalume.

Avoid pressed metal tiles, imitation shingles or split western red cedar shakes when re-roofing, as these reduce the historic integrity.

Chimneys

Chimneys are important elements contributing to a building's form and it is best to retain these even if no longer used.

As chimneys are very exposed to the weather, on-going checking and maintenance is required. Regular repointing with lime-based mortar will provide protection against deterioration and ensure longevity.

The slate roof and original chimneys of Waite House are inherent design features. The caretaker's residence is not. A roof extension is well concealed behind the main roofs.

Skylights

Locate new skylights to minimise their visibility. Where skylights are used, flush glazed lights or translucent corrugated sheeting are less intrusive than an acrylic dome.

Corrugated polycarbonate roofing provides an unobtrusive skylight.

Lighting

Avoid replica period lighting and only use exact reproductions if the original types are known from photographic or surviving evidence. Simple fittings are usually less obtrusive and fit better into the overall character.

External lighting may be attached to timber trims, such as fascia and barge boards, to minimise damage to masonry walls.

Security

Security measures can be intrusive and it is important to select components that have minimal impact. It is best to retain original door locks and hardware and supplement them by the discreet use of modern products.

In many instances an alarm system is less visually intrusive than physical barriers such as security doors and windows, grilles and shutters.

Services

The impact of services can be severe and it is important to consider carefully their location and alternative means of provision.

In particular, exhaust fans, commercial kitchen extractor outlets and exposed plumbing can all be unsightly.

An alternative to locating plant such as air-conditioning cooling towers on the roof is to install these elements at ground level. Vents and grilles can be concealed or screened, and their surfaces painted to blend with the surroundings. Room air-conditioners fitted into the wall or through windows are intrusive and best avoided.

To avoid creating openings in original external walls, meter boxes can be installed as freestanding cubicles, suitably screened and away from the building, with an underground supply to the building.

External pad mounted transformers, hydrants and fire boosters can also be intrusive and difficult to screen, especially when placed close to street boundaries.

Services dominate this corner which faces the side road and main approach to the house.

6. GUIDELINES FOR MINOR ADDITONS

Minor additions usually take the form of new verandahs, small-scale additions, or extensions into the existing roof space.

Scale

In the design of minor additions, the scale and choice of materials for new elements should respect the existing features and materials and not dominate them.

Walls

New walls can be designed to blend with or complement the existing walls. In many instances it is better not to copy the original wall materials and details, as this detracts from the identity of the original.

Steel and glass complement but do not imitate the stonework. The new is separated from the old by a recessed link. Frome Street Stables, Adelaide

Heavily textured materials, such as split faced concrete blocks, tumbled bricks or deeply raked brick joints, attempt to imitate old materials and techniques but visually detract from, rather than complement, the original. Flush struck brickwork or fine sand finished render can provide a neutral, complementary wall surface. Heavily textured, bagged or rendered finishes should also be avoided. Limewash or cement paints can be used to achieve a soft broken appearance that ages and blends well with historic buildings.

Lightweight wall materials such as painted weatherboard, corrugated iron or texture-coated cement sheet are more suitable for use than lightweight brick facings, cement sheet planks or PVC weatherboards.

This new wall has been kept clear of the existing window opening. The new roof is separated and the junction is set back behind the downpipe and rainwater head. St Matthew's Church, Hahndorf.

It is best not to tie new masonry walls in to existing masonry rigidly, but to separate them by a construction joint that allows for differential structural movement. Windows or lightweight panels can also be used to provide both visual and structural articulation.

Roofs

It is better to select new roof materials that match or complement the original. Products such as metal roof tiles, PVC or square profile gutters and downpipes detract from the character of historic buildings.

Floors

Use suspended timber or concrete floors instead of a concrete slab-on-ground. This reduces the likelihood of bridging the damp proof course and does not interfere with sub-floor ventilation.

Verandahs

Verandahs provide a transitional zone between indoors and outdoors and are an integral part of the design of the building. If new verandahs are provided they should maintain the general scale, proportions and form of any original verandah without replicating detailing from a particular period.

Enclosure of an original verandah can alter a building's external appearance and character, and reduce daylight and natural ventilation to existing rooms. It is preferable not to extend or alter existing verandahs where this changes the balance and scale of the building. Similarly, avoid adding lace, fretwork or other embellishments to existing verandahs where none originally existed.

Verandah repairs or reconstruction can be designed to follow closely the form, materials and details of the original. Retain original verandah pavements wherever possible. Replacement of a timber verandah floor with concrete is not recommended where damp-proof courses are likely to be bridged and sub-floor ventilation blocked.

Carports and garages

Car parking cannot always be accommodated easily and special provision may need to be made to cater for increased demand for car-parks. Ensure that the design and location of driveways, car parks, carports and garages does not dominate the setting of the building.

Carports should be freestanding and visually separated from the original buildings.
They should not be located in front of significant facades. Setting a carport back from the facade or integrating it with an addition or extension may help reduce its visual intrusion.

Similarly, separate garages from the original buildings, locating them to the rear or sides.
If a new carport must be attached to an existing building, simple lean-to roofs rather than bullnose or concave roofs often fit in better. Flat roofs and metal roller doors are usually not in character and are best avoided.

Extending this verandah to form a carport has spoilt the symmetry of this cottage.

A cleanly detailed cantilever canopy contrasts with the texture and patina of the masonry wall.
Frome Street Stables, Adelaide

The simple skillion roofs of these new carports complements the original stone outbuilding. Little Scotland, Goolwa.

Lean-to additions

The rear of many Victorian and Edwardian buildings often consisted of lean-to structures to accommodate porches, service rooms or kitchens. These structures have often themselves been altered or extended and they contribute to the character and history of the building.

Additions to the Criterion Cottage in Robe have been articulated into small forms that retain the dominance of the original. New materials and windows complement but do not mimic the original.

Existing lean-to structures should be retained where they contribute to the overall integrity and significance of the building.

Lean-to structures that extend too far out from a building usually result in low ceiling heights. Traditional lean-to structures usually had a minimum pitch of 5 degrees and new work should generally not be less than this.

Steel sheet roofing of profiles other than corrugated can be installed at very flat pitches, and this is often used to achieve greater cover.
However, the appearance of seemingly flat roofs does not sit comfortably with traditional pitched roof forms, and these roofs, where unavoidable, are best concealed behind parapet walls.

Parapet walls can be used to conceal low pitched roofs. Former East End Market, Rundle Street, Adelaide

Extending the original roof form

Extension of the main roof by means of a gable or hipped form may be appropriate. However, these alterations are best hidden from the front or most important facades.

When adding to an existing gable, the new roof can be joined under the existing barge boards and the walls set in slightly to maintain a clear distinction between new and old.

Hipped and gabled extensions of the main roof form.

Separating new from old

Where a lean-to or main roof extension cannot accommodate the floor area required, a better solution may be to build a new, linked structure. This may follow the general form of the original but avoid exact replication. A sympathetic addition can be designed that maintains the general form, scale and roof pitch of the original.

House addition using the existing lean-to as a link.

New bathrooms to the rear of the Paxton Square cottages in Burra are separated from the lean-to by a recessed link.

7. GUIDELINES FOR MAJOR ADDITIONS

Generally, where new functions cannot be accommodated within the existing building envelope, major additions are best designed as separate structures. This approach emphasises the discrete character of the original building while allowing the addition to have its own architectural identity.

Siting

It is important to define a curtilage zone around existing buildings to protect their setting and ensure that new structures or car parking do not dominate. Consider views into and out of the existing buildings when defining the curtilage. Environmental factors such as over-shadowing and wind channelling are also important considerations.

Commercial additions in a pseudo-heritage style have destroyed the curtilage of this old house in Kent Town.

Links

Locate the links between new and old buildings where they have least visual impact. For example, an adequate set back from both buildings will emphasise the articulation between the two and can be lower than the principal roof forms.

The link between new and old buildings can be emphasised by using different materials. Glass or other visually unobtrusive lightweight construction materials, for example, are often used with good results.

A glazed stairwell has been used to create a setback link for this addition for the CSIRO in Kintore Avenue.

Scale relationships

It is important to relate the scale and bulk of major additions to the existing buildings. The plan form, massing and roof pitch should reflect the general character of the existing buildings without imitating them.

Reduce the overall scale of large additions by articulating parts of the structure to enable a comfortable fit with the existing building. Set taller additions further back to ensure they do not intrude above the skyline of the original building.

Character

Major additions should appear as new building work, sympathetic to, but not mimicking, the character of the original buildings. The use of brick quoins, lacework, small pane windows or other details copied from older buildings should be avoided.

Relate the scale, proportion and pattern of window and door openings in new facades positively to the original buildings, particularly in adjoining walls.

Where the addition will become part of an existing streetscape, the building's setback, facade design, articulation of the building

mass and scale are important elements to be considered. Take particular care at ground level to ensure that the new facade is detailed and scaled to maintain the pedestrian amenity of the street.

Additions at the rear of the Astor Hotel provide a contemporary space that complements but does not intrude.

Materials

Use contemporary materials that relate positively to the original buildings in terms of colour, texture, form and scale.

The texture of new walls may reflect the existing building without replicating historic details. The materials selected will determine the texture and depth of shadow that can be achieved.

Colours may complement those used on the original, reinforcing the presence of existing buildings rather than dominating them.

8. LANDSCAPE

A building's setting contributes to its character and significance and it is important that this be considered when planning modifications. Features that may contribute to a building's setting include fences, paving, fountains, statues and other garden features, lawns, minor structures such as garden sheds and pergolas, and existing vegetation. Retain existing mature trees wherever possible as these provide shade and amenity and are often an important visual element in a building's setting. Where existing trees threaten the structural stability of a building or wall, specialist engineering and landscape architectural advice should be sought prior to removal of the tree.

Signs

For some sites, visitor and directional signage may be required. Poorly designed or located signs can confuse visitors and can be visually intrusive. On the other hand, well designed and located signs contribute to the overall appearance and use of places, and can complement the existing qualities of a building and its setting.

Paving

Traditional paving materials such as gravel, brick and bitumen are an important part of a building's setting. New materials can be chosen to complement building and other existing landscape materials. Care in the selection of some gravels needs to be taken to avoid introduction of materials that may exacerbate salt attack.

Car parking

Provision of car parking, particularly for commercial uses, can have a major impact on the setting of a heritage building.

Parking areas are usually best located to the side or rear rather than the front of the building. Locate car parking where it has a minimal impact on the existing landscape elements such as trees, garden features and outbuildings.

Gravel or brick paving, flush edge strips, and shade trees using traditional plants can be used to create an informal and sympathetic car park. Fences and hedges can be used to screen parked cars from view.

New car parking at Eynesbury College complements the formal character of the building.

Walls and fences

Fences can be designed to suit differing styles of building. Materials available for fence construction include stone, brick, timber, corrugated galvanised iron, stone, wrought iron, cast iron and wire.

New fences can be designed to complement the scale and character of the existing buildings.

Ulva Cottage in Penola awaits the reconstruction of its fence and cottage garden to complete its restoration.

Plants

Gardens contribute positively to the character of a building and its setting. The retention of existing plants and enhancement with similar species helps to reinforce existing outdoor spaces or to create new ones. Select tree species on the basis of appearance and function, avoiding overshadowing or blocking views of buildings. New planting should take into consideration the location of existing services and avoid possible future damage to structures. Hedges and other shrubs can be used to screen car parks and service areas as well as enclose outdoor living spaces.

The age and character of the buildings will help determine the planting style. In many urban settings the use of exotic deciduous plant material in formal beds is appropriate.

9. FURTHER READING

Australia ICOMOS 1992, ***The Illustrated Burra Charter***

City of Adelaide 1993, ***Planning and Design Guidelines***

Ian Evans 1983, ***Restoring old houses,*** Sun Books

Ian Evans et al. 1984, ***Colour schemes for old Australian houses,*** Flannel Flower Press

Ian Stapleton 1991, ***How to restore the old Aussie house,*** enlarged edition, Flannel Flower Press

Howard Tanner et al. 1975, ***Restoring old Australian houses and buildings: An architectural guide*** Macmillan Co.

See also other State Heritage Branch publications

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