

# 6

## The Heritage Overlay Guidelines

### External Alteration and Additions to Contributory Elements

This section applies to works (including detached Additions such as garages) to the exterior of a Contributory Element in a Heritage Place covered by a Heritage Overlay.

If demolition is proposed, also refer to Chapter 3 – Demolition.

Refer also to the relevant Planning Scheme – including the State Planning Policy Framework, the Local Planning Policy Framework, and applicable Zones and Overlays (particularly the Heritage Overlay).

#### 6.1 Objectives

To encourage the Conservation and Restoration of Heritage Places

To ensure that Alterations and Additions respect the Contributory Elements of a Heritage Place

To ensure that Alterations and Additions do not adversely affect the significance, character and appearance of the Heritage Place

To ensure that Alterations retain the significant parts of built fabric

To ensure that the significant parts of Contributory Elements retain their prominence and are not dominated by new works

To allow for the Adaptation of heritage buildings, while ensuring that all other heritage objectives are met

#### 6.2 Rationale

*The aim of conservation is to retain the cultural significance of a place.*

*Conservation is based on a respect for the existing fabric, use, associations and meanings. It requires a cautious approach of changing as much as necessary but as little as possible.*

*New work such as additions to the place may be acceptable where it does not distort or obscure the cultural significance of the place, or detract from its interpretation and appreciation. New work should be readily identifiable as such. (Burra Charter).*

Few Heritage Places survive in a totally unaltered state. Most undergo some form of change. Appropriate development guidelines can ensure that the significance of the place is not adversely affected by change.

Alterations and Additions which copy historical styles misrepresent the historical Form of the Heritage Place. They can also create confusion between significant and introduced fabric for future generations.

#### 6.3 Matters for Consideration

In assessing how built fabric may either be added to or altered, consideration should be given to whether:

- **evidence of a relevant previous Form is available;**
- **on close inspection, the use of traditional details would confuse an understanding of the development of the place and its significance;**
- **changes to external finishes would constitute an Alteration;**
- **Alteration would be consistent with achieving the Objectives for Demolition (See Chapter 3);**
- **Alterations visible from the public realm respect the significant parts of the building;**
- **the Form of the Addition, where visible from the public realm, respects the external shape, bulk, facade pattern and materials of the significant parts of the site, including open spaces;**
- **the Form of the Addition, where visible from the public realm, respects the external shape, bulk, facade pattern and materials of adjoining Contributory Elements, including open spaces; and**
- **the height and position of an Addition, where visible from the public realm, would negatively impact upon the prominence of either the significant parts of the Heritage Place or of adjoining and adjacent Contributory Elements.**



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## 6.4 Development Guidelines

The following guidelines and examples are intended to assist when external Alterations or Additions to Contributory Elements and Individual Heritage Overlays are being considered. They are based on some common settings, but will not be appropriate for every situation. Heritage Places should be approached on a case by case basis and there is no 'one-size-fits-all' answer to development. Use the Statement of Significance to inform decisions.

**It is acknowledged that there may be other ways to achieve the objectives.** Where alternative methods are proposed, the planning permit application should be accompanied by a written explanation that shows how the objectives will be achieved.

Note that where identified in the Statement of Significance for a Heritage Place covered by an Area HO, particular Contributory Elements may require greater retention of fabric than that indicated in the guidelines in Chapter 3 – Demolition. Alterations and Additions to existing fabric in these instances might similarly be further restricted. For example, in some heritage studies there is a graded system for Contributory Elements with particular grades recommending the retention of intact significant parts whether or not these are visible from the public realm.

### 6.4.1 Alterations and Additions to the Built Fabric of Heritage Places Covered by an Individual HO

A site-specific response is required for each place covered by an Individual HO. In some cases where substantial changes are proposed to a building covered by an Individual HO, a suitably qualified professional should prepare a Conservation assessment. This should include a Statement of Significance for the site and an assessment of the impact of the proposed works on significance.

Alteration to original or later significant components constitutes demolition of part of the significant Building Fabric, and is not consistent with the Conservation of the significance of a Heritage Place.

Conservation might include Alterations that restore or Reconstruct to a known earlier state, for example missing windows, verandahs or shopfronts. Accurate Reconstruction of missing parts is encouraged where evidence exists. Appropriate evidence for Reconstruction includes photographs, early and original plans and maps, and physical examination of the surviving fabric by an appropriate expert.

Where previous Form is not known, Alterations should be distinguishable on close inspection as an interpretation of anticipated Form. Conjectural Reconstruction is not encouraged. *Changes to a place should not distort the physical or other evidence it provides, nor be based on conjecture. (Burra Charter).*

The design of Additions should not detract from the Form and materials of a Heritage Place, and should be positioned and sized to ensure that the prominence of significant parts of a Heritage Place are retained. While both contemporary and conservative design approaches are appropriate, Forms and materials that detract from the significant parts of a Heritage Place should be avoided.

The use of simple shapes of similar scale, proportions and materials is appropriate. However, the use of traditional details should not confuse an understanding of the significance of the place. On close inspection, Additions similar to the existing Forms at a Heritage Place should be distinguishable as new works.

Where Heritage Places covered by Individual HOs are also within an area covered by an Area HO, Additions and Alterations should be consistent with the Contributory Elements of the Area HO.

### 6.4.2 Alteration to Surface Finishes to Built Fabric in a Heritage Place Covered by an Individual and an Area HO

Removal of existing surface finishes by water blasting, sandblasting or chemical removal and the like is discouraged where this would alter the original fabric. For example, sandblasting which removes a layer of the original material and usually damages it, is inappropriate. Sometimes gentle removal of later layers will reveal parts which contribute to significance, and is appropriate. Refer to Chapter 10 (External Painting and Finishes) and to Heritage Victoria technical notes.



*Damage to brick surface as a result of inappropriate sandblasting*

### 6.4.3 Alterations within a Heritage Place Covered by an Area HO

#### Alterations to Building Fabric

To conserve Contributory Elements and ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of a Heritage Place, the retained components of Contributory Elements should not be altered. Refer to Chapter 3 - Demolition.

#### Alterations to Building Fabric which reinstate missing parts

Conservation might include Alterations that restore or reconstruct to a known earlier state, for example missing windows, verandahs or shopfronts. Accurate Reconstruction of missing parts will enhance elements that contribute to the significance of Heritage Places and is encouraged where evidence exists. Appropriate evidence for Reconstruction includes photographs, early and original plans and maps, and physical examination of the surviving fabric by an appropriate expert.

Where the previous Form is not known, Alterations should be distinguishable on close inspection as an interpretation of anticipated Form. Conjectural Reconstruction is not encouraged. *Changes to a place should not distort the physical or other evidence it provides, nor be based on conjecture. (Burra Charter)*



*Reconstruction of the rear stairwell of the Toongabbie Mechanics Institute – before (left) and after reinstatement of missing parts (right)*

### 6.4.4 Additions within a Heritage Place Covered by an Area HO

#### Approach

To enhance Contributory Elements and ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of a Heritage Place, the design of Additions should not overwhelm the Form and materials of the Contributory Elements. Additions should be positioned and sized to ensure that their prominence is retained.

While both contemporary and conservative design approaches are appropriate, Forms and materials that detract from the parts which contribute to the significance of Contributory Elements should be avoided.

#### Form of Additions visible from the public realm

New Additions should respect the Form and materials of a Heritage Place, and be positioned to ensure that the prominence of parts which contribute to the significance of the Contributory Element and adjoining Contributory Elements.

The use of simple shapes of similar scale, proportions and materials is appropriate. However, the use of traditional details should not confuse an understanding of the significance of the Contributory Element. On close inspection, Additions similar to existing Forms of the Contributory Element should be distinguishable as new works.

Atypical buildings within a Heritage Place (whether Contributory or Non-contributory Elements), should not be taken as reference points for the purposes of determining the appropriate Form or features for Additions.

#### Form of Additions not visible from the public realm

It may not be necessary to restrict the Form of the Addition where it is not visible from the public realm and would not dominate a Heritage Place.

#### Setback of Additions

To enhance Contributory Elements and ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of a Heritage Place:

- set back rear Additions behind the retained Building Fabric (refer Chapter 3 – Demolition);
- ensure Additions are not positioned above the retained Building Fabric;
- where open space is a feature of the Heritage Place (as defined in the Statement of Significance), Additions should be set back to align rear open space with that of adjoining properties;
- in a low density setting (see Chapter 3 - Demolition), Additions should be located where they have minimal impact on the main buildings and the outbuildings which contribute to significance;
- on either corner or open sites Additions should be set back from the side street consistent with other corner setbacks within the area covered by the Area HO; and

- where the side street contains adjoining buildings which are Contributory Elements, Additions should be set back to ensure that they do not diminish the prominence of the adjoining Contributory Element.

### Height of Rear Additions

The Statement of Significance, Local Planning Policy or council's heritage advisor might provide guidance on the level of concealment that should apply to Additions which are taller than the existing building, in a particular Heritage Place covered by a HO.

To ensure that new development does not adversely affect the significance of a Heritage Place the following guidelines should be considered:

- the level of concealment that is appropriate within the Heritage Place;
- Additions should not dominate the public view of retained fabric;
- the overall height of the Additions, including the roof, should not overwhelm any adjoining Contributory Elements; and
- where the height of proposed Additions is taller than the retained fabric, the visibility of development should be assessed in relation to the retained building, from viewing points 1.7m above natural ground level on the opposite footpath, from directly in front and from a position aligned with the boundary two allotments away, on either side. Taller Additions should not dominate the retained fabric when viewed from these positions. (See figure 1).
- in a low density setting where open landscape is the dominant characteristic, Additions should be kept lower than either the main buildings and/or the outbuildings which are significant parts.
- on corner or open sites:
  - the visibility of taller Additions should be assessed from both streets; and
  - Additions should not dominate the retained fabric when viewed from the footpath directly opposite in both streets or from the open situation, e.g. adjoining parks.
- where lanes and adjoining public spaces are noted as a Contributory Element in the Statement of Significance, Additions should not dominate them.

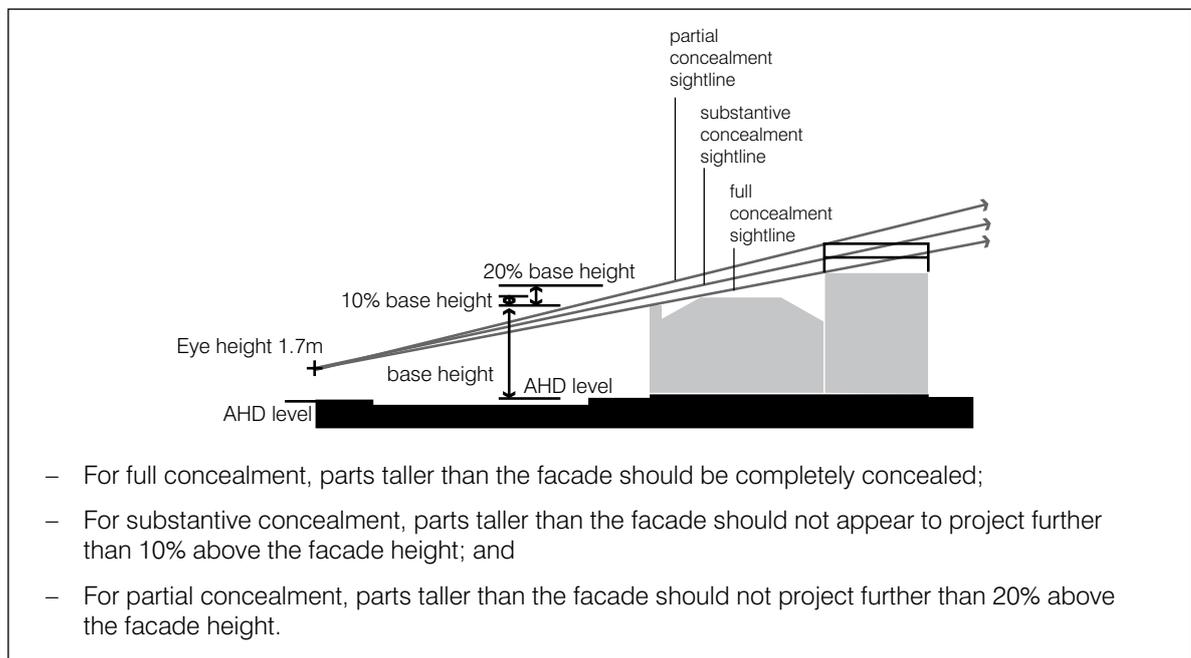


Figure 1: Techniques which can be applied when considering visibility of Additions which are taller than the retained fabric

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