

## 4.0 CATHERINE HILL BAY HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREA

This Section is closely linked to, and should be read in conjunction with, Part 7.0 Common Requirements.

Heritage Conservation Areas are areas defined in the LEP as having heritage conservation value because of their heritage integrity and/or their homogenous character.

New development and applications for alteration of existing houses or properties within such areas usually require development consent. Applications for such consent are normally required to include investigations of cultural significance, as well as assessment of the impact on the heritage significance of the area and on adjoining property.

### 4.1 SIGNIFICANCE

The extended settlement of Catherine Hill Bay has significance for its landscape and its buildings, but also because of its unique history of development.

Catherine Hill Bay has picturesque and distinctive historic townscapes, and land/seascapes unrivalled in Lake Macquarie, as well as a binding historic theme.

Catherine Hill Bay village has the oldest group of buildings in Lake Macquarie. The buildings form a number of integrated streetscapes and are a constant reminder of the settlement's origins as a nineteenth century mining village.

Both Catherine Hill Bay village and Middle Camp village are rare examples of 'Company Town' developments in Lake Macquarie.

Company town infrastructure survives in the Upper Hunter and other parts of Australia but Lake Macquarie mine developments were generally less organised. Uniform development of these villages has produced unique townscapes.

Distant views over the town are as important as close up views. The distinctive urban pattern of the main village set within its coastal and bush landscape can be appreciated from a range of vantage points, particularly from the important northern approach.

The high visibility of the main village precinct, including rear yard areas, with natural bushland edges, makes it highly sensitive to new development. There are already a few examples of out-of-scale additions.

The original buildings, a majority of which date from the 1890's to the 1920's, were mostly small vernacular cottages. There were very few buildings recognisable as belonging to a particular style, or period.

All dwellings display a high degree of consistency in size, scale, form, setbacks, siting and materials. This integrity is also unique, relative to other older precincts in Lake Macquarie.

The settlement is also an important archaeological resource for Lake Macquarie, with considerable potential for the State, as an industrial heritage site.

### 4.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the Heritage Conservation Area guidelines are to:

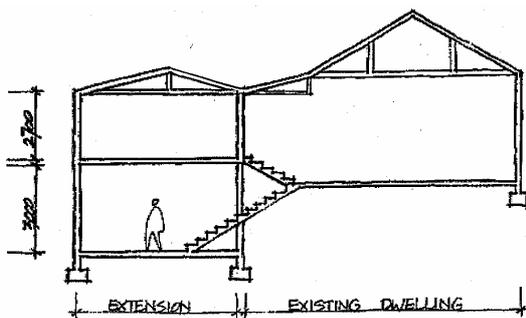
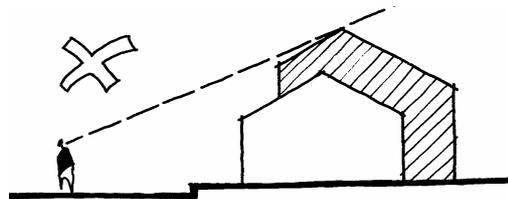
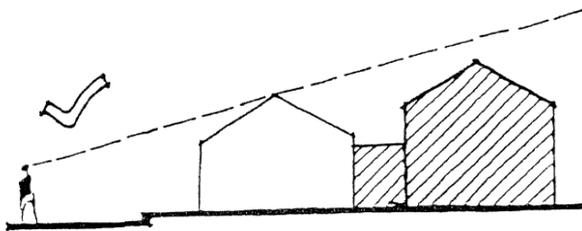
- retain the surviving *fabric* of the original settlement,
- preserve the unique and significant features of the local townscape,
- preserve the outstanding natural setting of the township and maintain established relationships of the town to the setting,
- ensure new development is in scale and character with the existing, as viewed from all major vantage points,
- preserve the existing character as a continuing record of the settlement's unique history, while allowing for gradual change, which may include complementary and sensitive new development.

### 4.3 HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

The following points should be kept in mind when considering development in the Catherine Hill Bay Heritage Conservation Area:

- All new development should *fit in*. It should be sensitive to the topography, to neighbouring development, and the historic character of the precinct.
- The existing *scale* of development should be maintained. It is important visually to break up the bulk of major extensions and new buildings to maintain the existing pattern of small cottages 'dotted in the landscape'.
- Buildings should generally be limited to one **storey** above street level to maintain scale and to permit greater 'view sharing'.
- In all cases, the *appearance* of new work should be considered from all vantage points, as well as from the street and neighbouring properties.
- Owners or purchasers of older workers' or miners' cottages should aim to maintain all surviving original *fabric*. If more space is needed, it should be allocated to a new and separate building on the same lot.

**Maintain scale and single storey appearance, especially from the street**



### 4.4 RESPECT FOR FABRIC

Catherine Hill Bay's typical older cottages are generally small and simply constructed. They do not conform to any particular style, though they have certain common elements and have essentially 'Georgian' elements.

They are generally square or rectangular in plan and elevation. Roofs may be hipped or gabled.

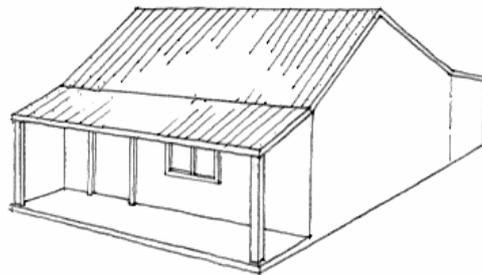
Invariably the houses have a simple skillion verandah across the front. The arrangement of window and door openings is often irregular.

The main part of the house usually has only one or two rooms. Simple 'lean to' extensions at the rear could accommodate kitchens or additional bedrooms.

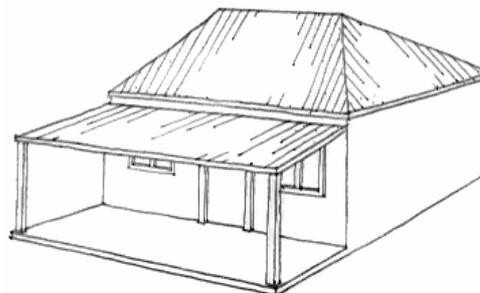
Houses are almost invariably constructed of timber, with iron roofs and weatherboard cladding. Joinery used for windows, doors, verandah posts and balustrades is often crude.

#### **Examples of typical early cottages found in Catherine Hill Bay**

*Gabled type with front verandah and rear skillion*

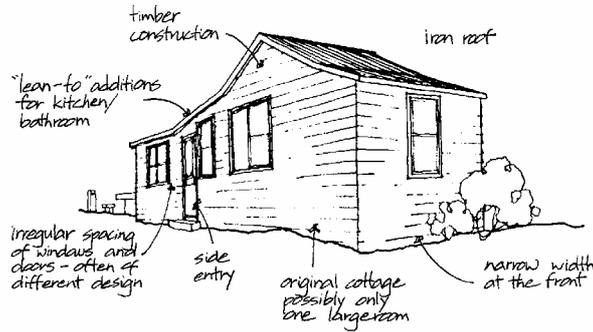


*Hipped type (less common) with front verandah*

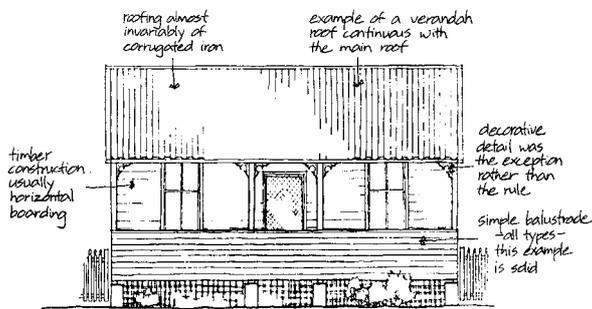


**Examples of typical Catherine Hill Bay Cottages**

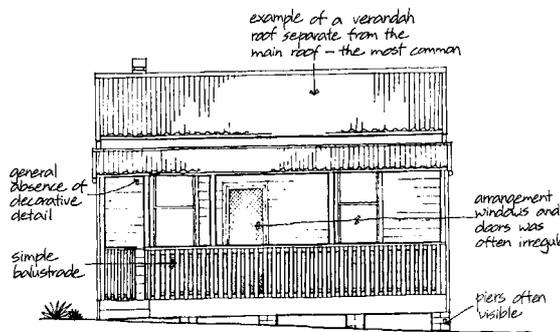
*Narrow fronted type (single room width)*



*Wide fronted type (two room width)*



*Wide fronted type - variation (two room width)*



Two or three small buildings on each large lot, is preferable to one large building as large dwellings are out of character with Catherine Hill Bay.

**4.6 BREAK UP THE BULK**

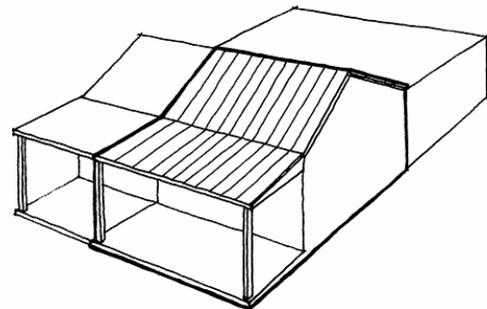
If the additions are going to be bigger than the original dwelling, the bulk should be broken up into smaller units, connected by small breezeways or enclosed passage-ways. This will have the benefit of allowing the extent of original fabric always to be discernible.

**Large Additions**

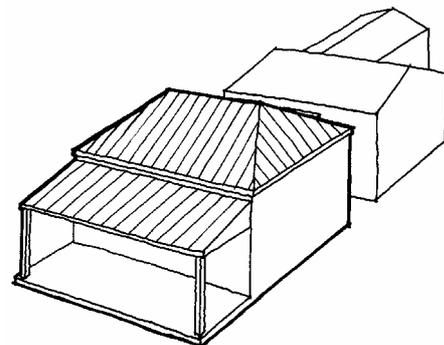
For very large extensions it would probably assist to break up the house into more than two segments.

In most parts of the original village, even buildings in rear yards will be seen from distance vantage points. It is important that people continue to see collections of small buildings from the approaching roads, rather than larger houses intruding among the original smaller cottages

***The original building should not become lost amongst the additions***



***Better to keep the extensions separate to reduce the impression of size.***

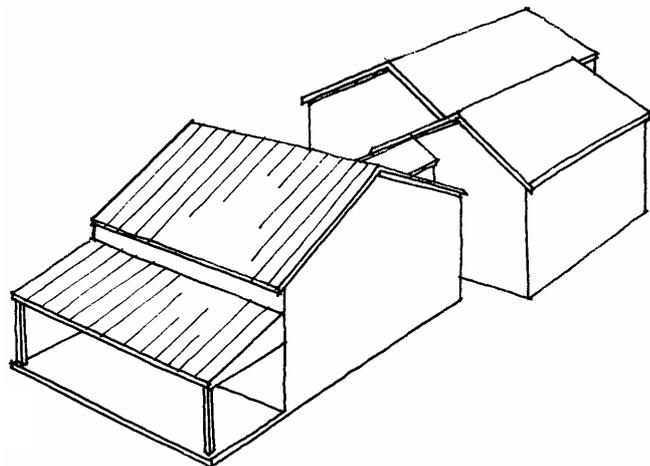
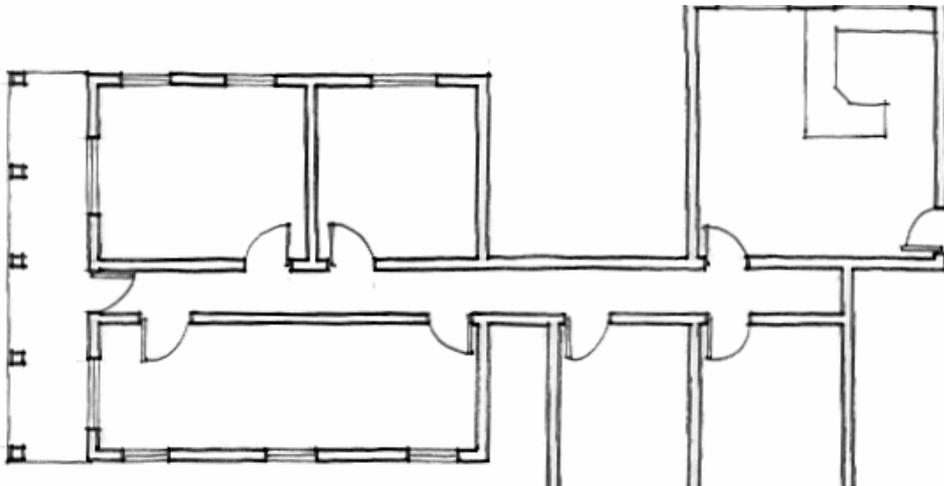


**4.5 FITTING IN/STREETSCAPE**

Most of Catherine Hill Bay's older houses were built on large lots, close to the street. This means that there is ample space at the rear of existing dwellings, for extensions or additional structures. Demolition of existing dwelling will not be permitted. To provide more accommodation, additions should be provided to the existing dwellings or in separate structures to the rear.

**Examples of large additions  
in Catherine Hill Bay**

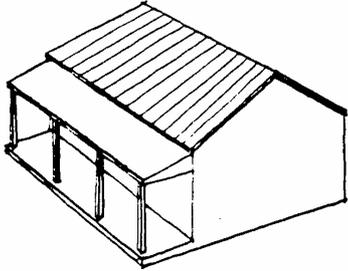
**Plan Illustration**



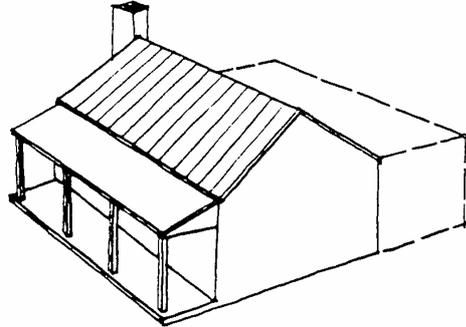
**Perspective Illustration**

**Options for Additions**

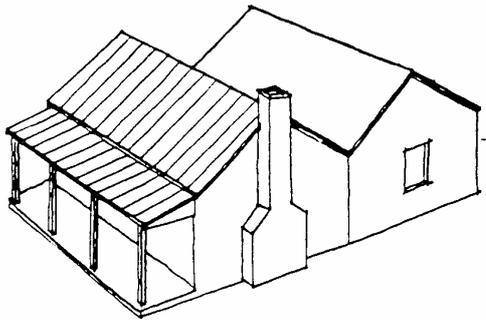
OPTIONS FOR ADDITIONS



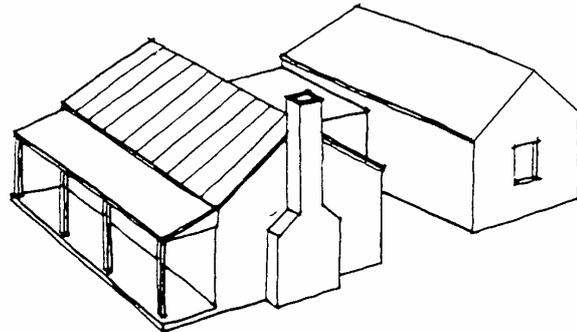
Typical existing cottage, simple form, with front verandah



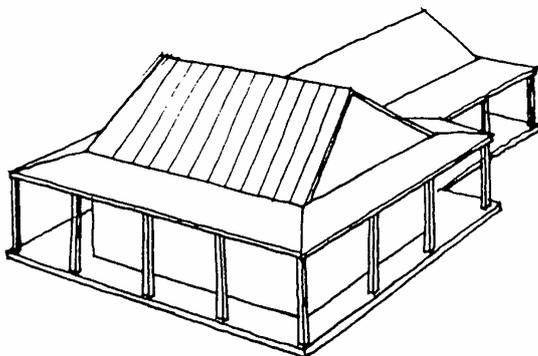
Existing cottage with a minor lean-to addition



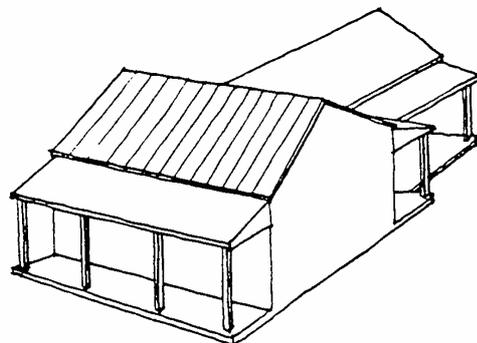
Addition to rear in similar form matching roof line. Acceptable only where the addition will not be seen from the street or other vantage point.



Pavilion type addition to rear. This is the preferred manner of additions for most Catherine Hill Bay.



Minor wing extension to rear, with a wrapped verandah around the house. This form of verandah is not appropriate for Catherine Hill Bay.



Minor rear wing extension with additional verandah confined to the extension.