

## 10. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

One of the most frequently asked questions is why renovate, why not demolish and build a new house instead?

Each individual's situation is different and there is no simple answer. While lot of project homes and so called KDR specialists (knock down, rebuild) claim it as a cost effective solution, a lot depends upon the existing condition of house and the size of renovation you are considering. It requires careful assessment.

- Your existing house may have some street significance, features, characters and building elements such as polished timber floor and timber windows, high ornamental cornices & ceilings, solid full brick construction and well elevated house (subfloor & brick piers). You may lose all this if you consider demolishing your house.
- Depending upon the priorities and available funds, renovation can be phased out in several stages to suit your budget
- Unless it is a major renovation requiring you to move out, generally you can continue to live and it saves relocation costs.
- When considering to demolish and building a new house, do your homework carefully; it may cost you far more than what you originally imagined.
  - Consider relocation cost
  - You may have new sets of planning regulations and restrictions applying to your property that were not applicable then such as site setbacks, permissible covered area and site coverage, maximum permissible height, privacy, overshadowing and stormwater management issues.

**What will be your fees for designing a new home or for renovating my house? Please also refer to brochure, 'How much do architects charge'.**

rchitect's fees can be negotiated on lump sum basis or on hourly basis or on percentage of estimated cost of project.

Before quoting the fees, it is important for architect to know architect's full scope of work, whether it is full commission basis, i.e., the architect is involved from start until completion or partial services commission only. Architect's fees is based upon the amount of time estimated to be spent upon the job. The architect must know details such as the client's expectations in terms of design style, details and specifications, site conditions, constraints, liaising with council, their requirements, whether the property is in conservation area, the engagement of specialist consultants and coordination requirement. **It is not possible for architect to quote the Lump Sum fees proposal at the outset during the intial phone discussion.**

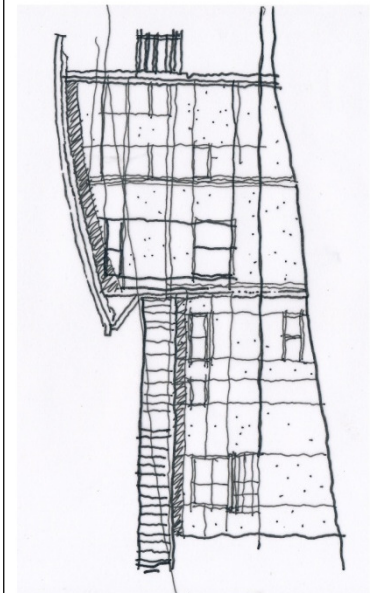
**Should I sell the existing property rather than renovating and move to a larger**

**house ?**

*Copyright Dynamic Design Solutions 2015: This is compiled by Lalit Mital, Dynamic Design Solutions, **only** as a guide and is not a comprehensive list. It must not be copied in part or full without permission of Lalit Mital, Dynamic Design Solutions. **Disclaimer:** The ideas expressed are writer's opinion only and should not be taken as a advice as the author takes no responsibility. Readers should do their own research and take their own decisions.*



next level...



If your house is in good location on the street, has a good orientation and is conveniently located close to amenities like transport, child care, shopping and schools, you may consider renovating your home rather than selling and moving out to alternate location. You should carefully consider selling, buying and relocation expenses.

### **Would I overcapitalise if I renovate my house ?**

If your house is in good location as discussed above, or in other words, if it is the worst house in best street then renovating your house should not be considered as overcapitalising. You have to assess your needs and requirements. You also need to assess the purpose of your renovation. Whether you intend to live there for many years or you want to renovate to improve the value of your property and then sell it. If you intend to live there for several years after renovation, generally it is anticipated that the value of property will appreciate and recover the renovation costs.

If your house is not well placed in terms of location, orientation, structurally not in sound condition, requiring substantial funds to repair and fix the existing defects and you do not intend to stay there for long then perhaps you may consider your renovation options carefully.

### **If considering a renovation, there are so many people in the market, where do we start ?**

Do your homework first-establish your requirements, have a preliminary discussion with your local council to check if there are any special requirements or restrictions on site. Consult a professional like an architect. To find an architect, discuss amongst your friends who might have engaged an architect recently. You can also visit Royal Australian Institute of Architects' official website to find an architect: [www.architecture.com.au](http://www.architecture.com.au)

A proper architect's advice while adding/altering your home can enhance and add value to your property. It can save you considerable amount of time and money. Additions and alterations not done thoughtfully on the other hand can make it look tacky.

### **Is it cheaper to extend on ground or extend upstairs ?**

Upper floor extension can be expensive as it has additional expenses associated with scaffolding requirements. However, if the building is structurally feasible then depending upon the existing roof configuration, particularly if the extension is in attic roof space or where the roof is high, there can be considerable saving on construction cost of new walls, insulation, cladding and floor surface.

Extension on ground floor, particularly on sloping site, uneven site or clay soil conditions may have considerable costs associated with surface preparation, excavations, footings, foundations, piles, masonry piers, termite treatment and pouring the concrete slab.

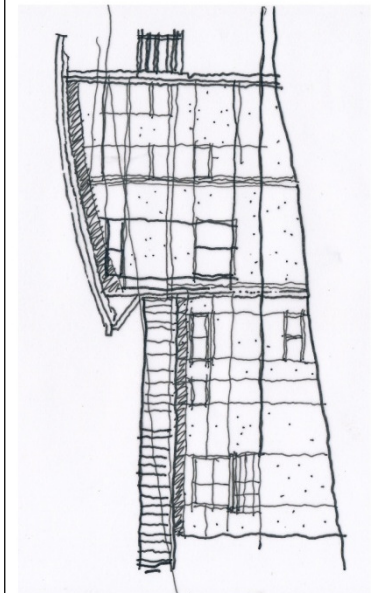
*Copyright Dynamic Design Solutions 2015: This is compiled by Lalit Mital, Dynamic Design Solutions, **only** as a guide and is not a comprehensive list. It must not be copied in part or full without permission of Lalit Mital, Dynamic Design Solutions. **Disclaimer:** The ideas expressed are writer's opinion only and should not be taken as a advice as the author takes no responsibility. Readers should do their own research and take their own decisions.*



**next level...**



**Taking architecture to**



Your lifestyle and available footprint also need to be considered before making the comparison and arriving at any decision.