

PURCHASING A PROPERTY-CHECKLIST

Purchasing a house

The first step to purchasing a house or a property is choosing the right location that suits your lifestyle and budget. Think about the benefits of living in an established community, near your work, close to shops, public transport and other amenities such as good schools and childcare facilities. Short list the suburbs that suit your location criteria and budget, particular streets and houses. You may also contact some local real estate agents in that area, attend some auctions and check the recent sales to get the feel for the prevailing prices.

When looking at purchasing an existing house, particularly with view to make additions and alterations, seeking professional advice about renovating or extending before you buy can save you a lot of money later. Often it is better to buy a less expensive house in the right location with orientation to suit the climate, then modify to it to suit your needs as your budget and needs dictate. Alterations-Wheeler; Alterations-Clarke

Consider following things before buying:

At the outset, check whether the house is in sound condition for future additions/alterations needs?

Organise a Building and Termite inspection by established and qualified building professionals. Seek a professional advice to establish the renovation potentials of the property that you may not be aware of. Estimate and compare the costs associated with the changes you would like to do?

What are the building materials and appliances? Are they low maintenance and durable?

Is there toxic and hazardous material such as asbestos being used on site? Consider the costs involved in getting rid of these in future.

Apart from the information related to the property provided in the Planning Certificate attached to the building contract, visit the local council and check with whether there is any particular planning instrument applicable to the property that may affect the future development. Is the property heritage listed or in council's conservation area, affected by future road widening or in Bush Fire Prone area? Check whether there is any development proposed in the vicinity in future that may affect your lifestyle?

Is the orientation and northerly solar access achievable and would it suit your desirable lifestyle?

How does the site slope? Is the slope gentle or steep? Would this slope suit the future addition and alteration? It is important to note that site with slope is generally more expensive to develop. Steep site slopes require additional site investigations and structural design requirements during construction.

Is the site sloping towards the front or sloping away from the front? Sites sloping to the back require stormwater to be discharged to council's specific requirements.

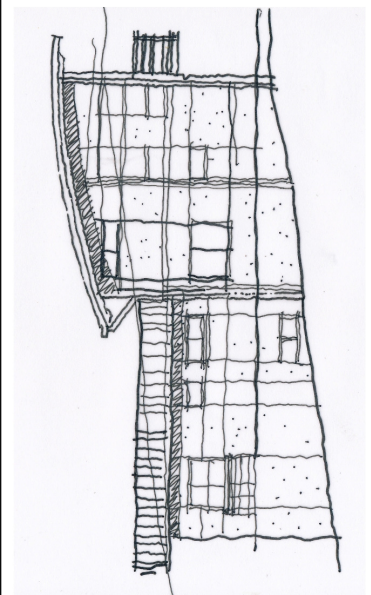
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Can the house be adapted to suit your needs now and in the future, e.g. is it suitable for upper level, rear or extension on side?

Check the neighbours houses, vegetation, existing trees and vegetation on subject property. Would they overshadow your property? There are tree preservation orders that may prevent removing the trees on site where you might be considering your extension.

Check the noise level if the property is in the vicinity of busy road or railway line.

Check for services such as overhead power lines or Sydney Water Boards sewer line under the property.

Check for any other latent underground assets such as services pipes and cables that might affect your future extension plan.

Purchasing a unit

Living in a villa or unit can be a great experience. However it can be really uncomfortable if there are large unprotected west facing windows with inadequate insulation in the roof. Look at the building fabric and sound proofing qualities, both being equally important features. Check the energy ratings of appliance such as taps and showerheads. Other important aspects are cross-ventilation, good outdoor spaces, outdoor clothes drying facility, good solar access, safe and secure pedestrian access, suitable mix of private, community and children play area. The proximity of units to shops and amenities, work and public transport is important.



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