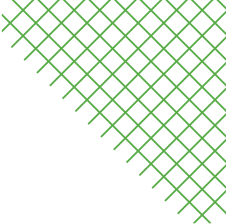


A photograph of a white, single-story heritage-style house with a prominent front porch. The porch features ornate white brackets and a white picket fence railing. A red door is visible through the porch. To the right, a white picket fence is partially visible, and a large tree with green leaves is on the far right. The sky is clear blue.

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**BUILDING OR
RENOVATING IN
HERITAGE
SUBURBS**

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
ENHANCING CHARACTER HOMES



From lovingly restoring a character villa to building a stylish new home in a heritage neighbourhood, Auckland's inner suburbs offer a great opportunity to create your dream home. But with special character overlays and restrictions to navigate, expert help is essential to get it right.

This practical guide walks you through everything you need to know to successfully build or renovate in Auckland's heritage areas. Get insider tips on council requirements, design options, material choices, budgeting and construction for both character renovations and sympathetic new builds.

Learn how to unlock your property's potential while preserving its timeless charm. Don't risk your biggest investment—discover what it takes to create a stunning character home with this all-in-one resource.

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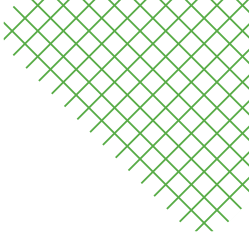
INTRODUCTION

There's something special about the historic homes in Auckland's inner suburbs. The original villas and bungalows have stood the test of time, with their classic features and craftsmanship. It's easy to see why they're always in high demand with homeowners and buyers.

If you're fortunate enough to own one of these homes, you'll appreciate their charms. The solid construction and historic character offer a great starting point for creating a home that combines the best of old and new. With a thoughtful renovation, you can update a villa or bungalow for today's lifestyle while keeping its original appeal.

Building a new home in a heritage neighbourhood is also a chance to add to the area's character. By taking cues from the surrounding homes and streetscape, you can create a house that fits right in. It's a way to enjoy the location's charm and convenience well into the future.

However, building or renovating in a special character area does have its challenges. You'll need to follow extra rules and requirements to get planning permission. The details of your design and construction also need special attention to get the character look right. It's not a one-size-fits all process.



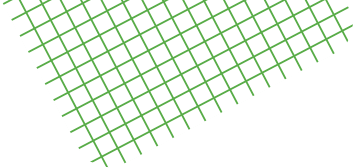
This guide is here to help. We've filled it with practical tips, advice and examples for building or renovating a character home in Auckland's inner suburbs. You'll learn how to spot a villa or bungalow with potential, what regulations apply, and how to choose the right team for your project.

We'll walk you through heritage design basics and share case studies from popular character suburbs. The aim is to inspire and inform your plans, whether you're restoring a run-down villa to its former glory or building a home that looks like it's always been part of the neighbourhood.

We'll also help you avoid the common mistakes and pitfalls that can derail character home projects. With the right knowledge, creating your dream period home in Auckland's inner suburbs can be a smooth and satisfying process - one that brings joy to your family and adds to your neighbourhood's story.

If you're ready to begin your character home journey, read on. In the following chapters, we'll dive into what it takes to make the most of Auckland's sought-after heritage suburbs.

HERITAGE
RENOVATION
FUNDAMENTALS



So, you've fallen for a character villa or bungalow in Auckland's inner suburbs. Whether it's a tired gem in need of TLC or a well-preserved beauty ripe for revival, it's vital to go in with eyes wide open. Renovating a heritage home is rewarding, but it does require extra care and attention compared to a standard remodel.

Start by assessing the home's potential. Look past the surface flaws and imagine how the home could look and function with a sympathetic makeover. Note any original features like native timber flooring, elaborate plasterwork, leadlight windows or a carved fireplace surround. These are the details you'll want to preserve and highlight.

On the flipside, check for signs of major issues like structural damage, rot, leaks or shoddy renovations. Remedial work can be costly, so factor this into your budget. If possible, get a building inspection to identify any hidden problems before you commit.

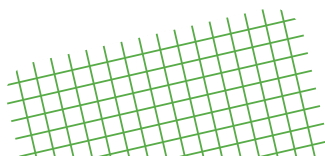
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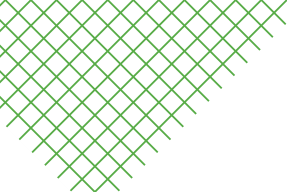
Next, research the council's rules for renovating character homes in the area. You'll likely need to apply for resource consent as well as building consent. This means submitting plans that show you're maintaining the house's heritage value and streetscape appeal. An experienced designer and builder can guide you through the process and help ensure your plans get approved first time.

When it comes to the design, it's all about enhancing the home's inherent character while making it suitable for contemporary living. Aim to restore period features like original doors, skirting boards and window frames. Consider retaining or reinstating a layout that's typical of the era, such as separate dining and living rooms.

At the same time, look for opportunities to subtly weave in modern comforts. Popular updates include installing insulation, double glazing and central heating for year-round cosiness. In the kitchen and bathroom, choose fixtures and finishes that nod to the home's vintage while providing everyday convenience.

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Updating services like electrics, plumbing and drainage is also essential for a safe, functional family home. This is where the knowledge of a character home renovation specialist is invaluable. They can advise on future-proofing your home while respecting its past.

As your plans take shape, keep the lines of communication open with the council, your designer and your builder. Regulations, costs and construction requirements can crop up along the way, so you'll need a united team to keep your project on track.

The time and effort you invest in your character home renovation will be well worth it. You'll have the satisfaction of preserving a piece of Auckland's built heritage while creating a comfortable home that's perfectly tailored to your lifestyle. In the next chapter, we'll delve deeper into villa and bungalow design to help inspire your renovation.

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A photograph of a hallway with a chandelier hanging from the ceiling and a stained glass window at the end. The hallway has light-colored walls and a wooden floor. The chandelier is ornate with multiple lights. The stained glass window features a central panel with a blue and white pattern, flanked by yellow panels, and topped with a red and blue panel. A white text box with rounded corners is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

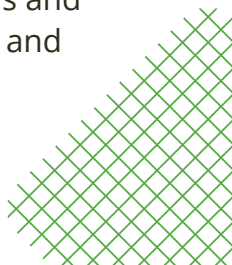
DESIGNING YOUR
CHARACTER
HOME
RENOVATION

Now that you've got a handle on the fundamentals, it's time to get inspired about your character home renovation design. Auckland's villas and bungalows are known for their distinctive features and layouts, which provide a great starting point for a functional and sympathetic update.

Villas, which date back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, often have a central hallway leading to generously proportioned rooms on either side. They're characterised by decorative details like bay windows, ornate plasterwork, high ceilings and timber accents.

Bungalows, built from the 1920s onwards, share some similarities but tend to have a more asymmetrical layout and simpler, crafted features. They'll often have exposed beams, built-in cabinetry and squat bricks or shingles.

When reworking your floorplan, aim to enhance the flow and functionality while making the most of the home's character. You might remove a non-original wall to create an open-plan living hub, or reinstate walls to define cosy nooks. Widening doorways and adding French doors can help improve access and light without compromising heritage charm.



In the kitchen, classic features like a farmhouse sink, tongue-and-groove panelling and a freestanding oven can blend seamlessly with modern conveniences. Integrate appliances behind joinery that matches the home's original cabinetry style for a cohesive look.

For bathrooms, claw-foot tubs, pedestal sinks and chequerboard tiles are all great options for a vintage vibe. Pair them with quality modern tapware, heating and storage for a bathroom that's both beautiful and practical. If space allows, consider squeezing in an ensuite or walk-in robe to add a touch of luxury.

When it comes to furnishings and decor, let the home's era be your guide. Opt for timeless, natural materials like timber, stone, ceramic and linen. Incorporate heritage colours, patterns and textures, but don't be afraid to add a few contemporary accents to keep the look fresh.

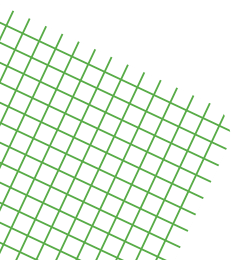
Creating a connection with the outdoors is key for making a character home feel bright and welcoming. Villas and bungalows often have verandas or bay windows that lend themselves to indoor-outdoor living. Consider adding french doors leading to a deck or patio where you can enjoy alfresco dining and relaxing.

In the garden, favour traditional plantings that complement the home's era and architecture. Roses, cottage perennials, box hedges and fruit trees are all good choices. Use natural stone or aged brick for paths and edging to create a sense of permanence.

Of course, every character home is unique, and the key is letting your home's features and your lifestyle needs guide the design. An experienced renovation designer can help you identity your villa or bungalow's potential and create a bespoke plan that ticks all the boxes.

By honouring your home's heritage while making thoughtful updates, you'll create a timeless renovation that's a joy to live in. Next up, we'll guide you through the construction process to help make your character home renovation a reality.

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A photograph of a modern, single-story house with a grey metal roof and light-colored horizontal siding. The house features a large, open-plan living area with a wooden floor, a grey sectional sofa, a dining table with white chairs, and a small kitchen area. A large glass sliding door opens up to a covered wooden deck. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The text "EXECUTING YOUR CHARACTER HOME RENOVATION" is overlaid on a white rounded rectangle in the foreground.

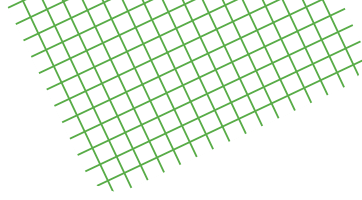
EXECUTING YOUR CHARACTER HOME RENOVATION

You've done your research, settled on a design and obtained the necessary consents. Now it's time to bring your character home renovation to life. Executing your plans successfully hinges on assembling the right team, using appropriate materials and managing the project effectively.

Start by finding a builder who specialises in character home renovations in your area. They should have a proven track record of working on heritage properties and a deep understanding of the era's construction methods and features. Ask to see examples of their work and speak to past clients to gauge their experience and reliability.

Your builder should also have strong relationships with trusted tradespeople who are skilled in heritage techniques. From re-pointing brickwork to restoring leadlight windows, it's crucial to have craftspeople who can repair and replicate original features authentically.

When it comes to materials, your builder can guide you on sourcing items that match your home's style and era. This might include reclaimed timber flooring, reproduction tiles, heritage door hardware and traditional plaster mouldings. Using genuine materials wherever possible will help create a renovation that looks and feels true to the original.



To keep your project on track, work with your builder to create a detailed schedule and budget. Factor in time and funds for any specialist work or materials, as well as a contingency for unexpected issues. Renovating an older home often uncovers surprises, from rotting timbers to outdated wiring, so it's wise to have a buffer.

Establish clear lines of communication with your builder and tradespeople from the outset. Have regular site meetings to review progress, discuss any changes and make decisions promptly. Keep a record of all variations and instructions, and document the work with photographs at each stage.

Your builder should keep you informed of any developments that may affect your timeline or budget. They should also liaise with the council to arrange necessary inspections and certifications along the way. This will help ensure your renovation meets all compliance requirements and avoids costly rework.



If issues arise during construction, address them swiftly and collaboratively with your team. Your builder's experience will be invaluable in finding solutions that maintain the integrity of your design while keeping the project moving forward.

Throughout the renovation process, take time to appreciate the craftsmanship and care that goes into restoring your character home. Those intricate details and time-honoured techniques are what will make your renovation truly special.

As the work nears completion, your builder will guide you through the final council sign-off and handover. This is your chance to review the finished product, ask questions and learn about maintaining your refreshed character home for the years ahead.

With your renovation complete, you'll have a home that blends the best of old and new - a comfortable, functional space that celebrates your villa or bungalow's heritage. In the next chapter, we'll take a closer look at some of Auckland's most sought-after character suburbs and the renovation opportunities they offer.

A modern kitchen interior featuring white cabinetry, a marble backsplash, and a long brass light fixture. The kitchen includes a stainless steel refrigerator, a built-in oven, and a gas cooktop. A wooden dining table and chairs are visible in the foreground.

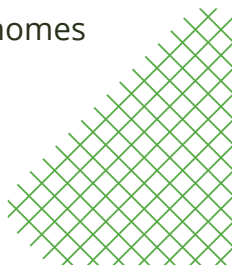
NEW BUILD
FUNDAMENTALS
FOR CHARACTER
SUBURBS

While renovating a character home is a rewarding endeavour, sometimes building a new home in a heritage suburb is the perfect way to enjoy the best of both worlds. You get to create a home that's tailored to your needs, while still being part of a neighbourhood with a special sense of place.

The first step is finding the right site. Keep an eye out for vacant lots or homes that are beyond repair in your chosen character suburb. Remember, you're not just buying a piece of land - you're buying into a particular street and community. Take time to walk around the area and get a feel for the neighbouring homes, gardens and amenities.

When assessing a site's potential, consider factors like its size, shape, orientation and topography. These will influence the design and layout of your new home. Also check for any easements, covenants or utility connections that may affect where and what you can build.

Before you start designing, it's crucial to understand the council's rules and restrictions for new builds in heritage areas. These are put in place to protect the neighbourhood's character and ensure new homes are sympathetic to their surroundings.



Depending on the suburb, you may need to adhere to specific guidelines around building height, roof pitch, setbacks, materials and design features. It's a good idea to engage a designer who's well-versed in the local character overlay and can help you navigate the consent process smoothly.

When it comes to the design of your new character home, take cues from the existing streetscape. Look for common elements like roof forms, window styles, verandas and weatherboard cladding. The aim is not to create a replica of a villa or bungalow, but rather a home that echoes the era's craftsmanship and charm.

Consider breaking up the building mass with asymmetrical rooflines, gables and bay windows to avoid a boxy, modern look. Use materials like timber, brick and stone that will age gracefully and blend in with the neighbouring homes.

Pay attention to details like eaves, brackets, fretwork and mouldings that can add authentic character without being overly fussy. A skilled designer will know how to incorporate these elements in a way that's fresh and suited to contemporary living.



Sustainability and performance are also key considerations for a new character home. Look for opportunities to integrate features like double glazing, insulation, solar panels and rainwater harvesting. These will help make your home more comfortable, efficient and environmentally friendly, without detracting from its heritage appeal.

As with a character renovation, choosing the right build partner is essential for a successful outcome. Look for a builder who has experience delivering new homes in character suburbs and a deep appreciation for the area's architectural heritage. They should be able to show you examples of completed projects that sit harmoniously within their streetscapes.

Building a new home in a character suburb requires a balance of respect for the past and vision for the future. By understanding the rules, engaging the right professionals and designing with sensitivity, you can create a home that belongs to both you and the neighbourhood.

In the next chapter, we'll explore some character-appropriate design ideas to inspire your new build.

CHARACTER-
APPROPRIATE
NEW BUILD
DESIGN

Designing a new home in a character suburb is an exciting opportunity to create a dwelling that's perfectly tailored to your lifestyle while respecting the neighbourhood's architectural heritage. The key is to take inspiration from the past and interpret it in a way that feels fresh, functional and authentic.

When it comes to architectural styles, look to the predominant housing types in your chosen suburb. In Auckland's inner suburbs, villas and bungalows are the most common character homes, so these are a great starting point for your design.

A villa-inspired new build might feature a symmetrical facade, a central hallway, high ceilings and a hip or gable roof. A bungalow-style home could have a lower-pitched roof, exposed rafters, deep eaves and a mix of cladding materials like weatherboards and shingles.

Whichever style you choose, aim for a simplified, pared-back version that nods to the original without replicating it directly. This will help your home feel more contemporary and avoid a 'mock heritage' look.

When planning your floorplan, consider how you can create a layout that's functional for modern living while referencing traditional character home features. This might include having separate living and dining rooms, a central fireplace, a verandah or a butler's pantry.

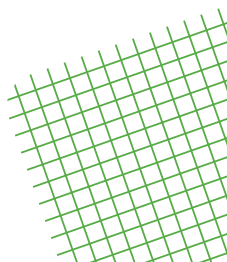
You could also incorporate built-in storage, window seats and niches that recall the craftsmanship of the past. The key is to balance these classic elements with open, flowing spaces that suit today's relaxed lifestyle.

In terms of materials, look to those commonly used in character homes of your chosen era. For villas and bungalows, this might include native timbers like kauri and rimu for flooring, joinery and trim. Brick and stone are also appropriate choices for chimneys, foundations and feature walls.

When it comes to cladding, opt for materials that will weather gracefully over time, like painted weatherboards, fibre cement shingles or natural timber. Avoid anything too modern or glossy that will stand out against the neighbouring homes.

Your colour palette is another opportunity to create a sense of heritage authenticity. Look to traditional paint charts for inspiration, and choose muted, earthy tones that would have been popular in the villa and bungalow eras. Think creams, greys, sage greens and duck egg blues for walls, with darker shades like burgundy, navy and forest green for trim.

Don't forget to carry your character-appropriate choices through to the finer details, like door and window hardware, light fittings, and tapware. Opting for classic styles in brass, bronze or porcelain will help create a cohesive, period-inspired look.

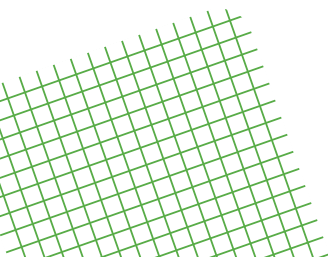


Finally, consider how you can use landscaping and hardscaping to settle your new build into its context. Incorporating established trees, hedges and garden beds will make your home feel like it's been part of the neighbourhood for years.

For paths, driveways and outdoor entertaining areas, choose materials that complement your home's style and era. Gravel, brick, paving stones and concrete with exposed aggregate are all good options for a character-appropriate look.

Remember, designing a character-appropriate new build is about more than just aesthetics - it's about creating a home that feels like it belongs in its surroundings. By working with a designer and builder who specialise in this area, you can be confident that every detail will be considered and executed to the highest standard.

The result will be a home that's a joy to live in and a true asset to the streetscape - a modern classic that will stand the test of time. In the next chapter, we'll showcase some stunning examples of character new builds and renovations to inspire your own project.





BUILDING YOUR
CHARACTER-
INSPIRED HOME

With your character-appropriate design finalised and approved, it's time to bring your vision to life. Building a new home in a heritage suburb requires careful planning, skilled craftsmanship and attention to detail at every stage.

The first step is choosing the right build method and team for your project. In Auckland's inner suburbs, there are a few common options:

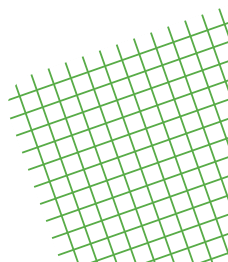
Engaging an architect to design your home and then tendering the build to contractors

Working with a group home builder who offers a range of pre-designed plans

Partnering with a design-build firm who can handle the entire process from concept to completion.

For a character-appropriate new build, the design-build approach often offers the most benefits. You'll have a single point of contact and accountability throughout the project, with a team who specialises in creating homes that complement heritage suburbs.

Your chosen builder should have a proven track record of delivering high-quality, architecturally-designed homes in character areas. They should also have strong relationships with trusted subcontractors and suppliers who are experienced in working with traditional materials and techniques.



Once you've assembled your team, it's time to prepare your site for construction. In heritage suburbs, this may involve additional considerations and approvals, such as tree protection, archaeological assessments and sediment control measures.

Your builder will also need to take into account any specific foundation requirements for your area, such as ground strengthening or piling. This is where local knowledge and experience is invaluable for avoiding costly surprises down the track.

With your site ready, your builder will work with you to create a detailed construction schedule and budget. This should include key milestones, material and fixture selections, and allowances for any bespoke features or finishes.

Regular communication and site meetings will help keep your project on track and address any issues promptly. Your builder should provide you with progress updates and photos at each stage, so you can see your character home taking shape.

Quality control is paramount for ensuring your new build meets the high standards of craftsmanship expected in a character home. Your builder should have rigorous processes in place for checking and documenting each aspect of the construction, from framing and cladding to joinery and finishes.

They should also work closely with the council to arrange necessary inspections and approvals throughout the build. This will give you peace of mind that your home is being constructed to the highest standards of safety, durability and compliance.

As your character-inspired home nears completion, your builder will guide you through the final touches and handover process. This is your chance to walk through the finished product, ask questions and learn about the care and maintenance of your new home's features.

With the keys in hand, you'll be ready to settle into your perfectly crafted character home and begin making memories. Your builder should provide you with a comprehensive warranty and aftercare service, so you can enjoy your new home with confidence for years to come.

Building a character-appropriate home in a heritage suburb is a complex and rewarding endeavour. By partnering with a reputable design-build firm like Best Nest Building, you can trust that every detail will be carefully considered and executed to create a home that belongs in its neighbourhood and exceeds your expectations.

A photograph of a two-story white house with a balcony. The house has a white picket fence in front. A white text box is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

BUILDING YOUR
CHARACTER HOME
WITH BEST NEST

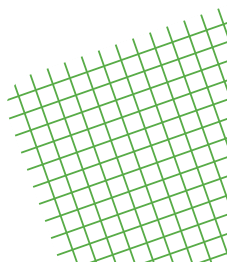
Building or renovating a character home in Auckland's inner suburbs is a truly rewarding endeavour. By honouring the architectural heritage of our most cherished suburbs, you're not only creating a beautiful and functional home for your family - you're helping to preserve and enhance the unique character of our city for generations to come.

As we've explored throughout this guide, character home projects come with their own set of challenges and considerations. From navigating heritage overlays and consent requirements to sourcing period-appropriate materials and crafting authentic details, there's a lot to think about.

That's why working with a builder who specialises in character homes is so important. With their deep knowledge of heritage suburbs, time-honoured techniques and commitment to quality, a specialist builder can take the stress and uncertainty out of your project - and help you achieve a stunning result that exceeds your expectations.

At Best Nest Building, we're passionate about bringing the beauty and charm of character homes to life. With over two decades of experience working in the city's most sought-after heritage suburbs, we've developed a reputation for delivering exceptional craftsmanship, attention to detail and customer care.

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Our team of expert builders, designers and project managers are dedicated to helping you create a character home that's perfectly tailored to your lifestyle and tastes. Whether you're looking to sensitively restore a grand old villa, update a classic bungalow for modern living or craft a character-inspired new home that fits seamlessly into the streetscape, we have the skills and expertise to bring your vision to life.

But don't just take our word for it. Check out our project gallery and client testimonials to see some of the incredible character homes we've created for satisfied clients. From Ponsonby to Point Chevalier, we've helped countless homeowners unlock the potential of their properties and create homes they'll love for a lifetime.

If you're ready to start your own character home journey, we'd love to hear from you. Get in touch with us today to discuss your project and discover how we can help you create a home that's as unique and special as you are.

With Best Nest Building by your side, you can trust that every detail of your character home renovation or new build will be carefully considered and executed to the highest standards. We'll work closely with you at every stage of the process to ensure that your home is not only beautiful and functional, but also reflective of your personal style and values.



Thank you for reading this guide. We hope it's given you a valuable introduction to the world of character homes in Auckland's inner suburbs and inspired you to start bringing your own heritage home dreams to life. Remember, when it comes to building or renovating a character home, there's no better partner than Best Nest Building.

Additional Resources

[Our Key to Confidence Guarantee](#)

[Our Partner Companies](#)

[Our Insightful Blogs](#)

Connect With Us

Ready to start your character home project? Contact Best Nest Building today:

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Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/BestNestBuildingCo/>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/bestnestbuilding/>

We look forward to helping you create a truly exceptional character home!