

Queen's Park
Historic District
◆
Residential Design
Guidelines

*City of New Westminster
Planning Department
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Intent

The intent of these voluntary guidelines is to help maintain the heritage character of single family properties in the Queen's Park Neighbourhood. The guidelines can be utilized by residents and builders to assist in the design process and by planning department staff during the design and approval stage for renovations, additions and new house construction.

Queen's Park Neighbourhood

The Queen's Park neighbourhood lies primarily between Royal Avenue and 6th Avenue, 1st Street and 6th Street in New Westminster. The neighbourhood contains approximately 660 houses, many of which are fine heritage examples, some with municipal heritage designation.

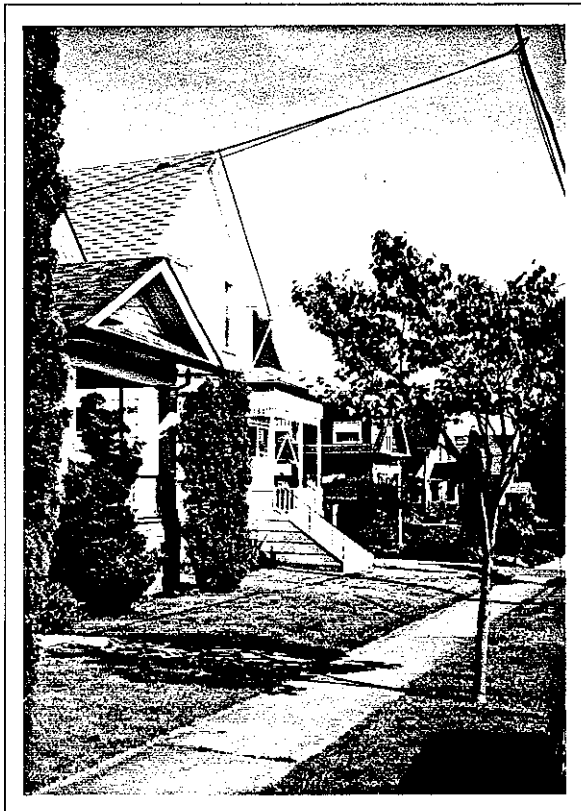
The Queen's Park Heritage Planning Study was a year and a half long process that involved extensive community consultation and workshops to investigate heritage values and goals. In the fall of 1996, a number of options for heritage initiatives arose from the Planning Study.

One of the initiatives was to create the Queen's Park Historic District - a unique Historic District that would include design guidelines to help retain the heritage character of the neighbourhood. The heritage theme of the Historic District could also be promoted through the use of appropriate signage at neighbourhood entries.





Queen's Park street character



Street Character



Brick paver driveway with grass strip

DESIGN GUIDELINES

A. Site Planning Concepts

Street Character

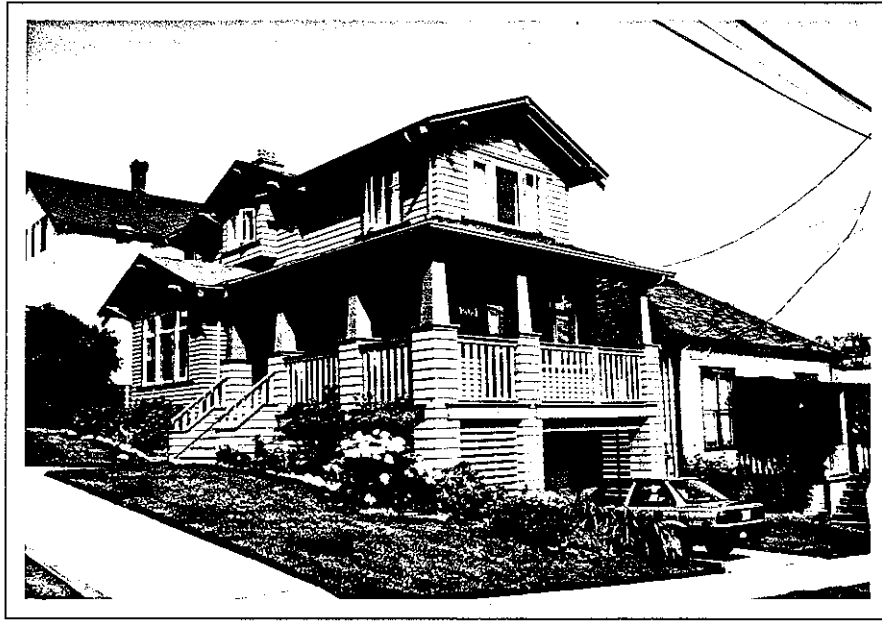
Street character is very important in maintaining a quality neighbourhood.

- Massing, roof shapes, building heights, front setbacks and architectural components are some of the elements of Queen's Park houses that add to the street character.
- New houses and additions should generally fit in contextually with the character of other houses in the neighbourhood.
- Height and yard setback variances may be required for a stronger contextual fit, many of the existing older houses do not strictly conform to current zoning regulations.
- Architectural components such as roofs, windows, entrances, porches, details, materials and colour should all respect those of the neighbouring houses.
- Sympathetic creativity, while offering interest and diversity, should be encouraged to reinterpret historic styles and building features.

Open Space and Landscaping

Formal lawns, planting beds and mature trees often occupy the front yards of houses.

- Historically, fences were only used symbolically and were low, under 4 feet. This provided a semi-public visual open space in the front yard.
- The rear yard was traditionally used for private open space though front yards are sometimes used due to the location of the house on the lot, better sun exposure, and improved privacy.
- Mature trees that contribute to the street character should remain; new houses, or when mature trees are lost, should have at least one new 'specimen' or high quality tree.
- Off-street parking should be maintained where possible, especially if a lane exists. In the case of narrow lots where a front garage is not desired, street parking may be more attractive.
- Vast driveways detract from neighbourhood character; driveways should be surfaced with patterned concrete or brick pavers; add a grass band down the middle or use spaced pavers with grass or moss inter-planting to reduce the apparent driveway width.



New corner lot house responding to both streetscapes



Second storey incorporated into roof form

Setbacks and Site Layout

The rhythm of houses along a street is greatly affected by the position of each house. Some variety in setbacks can be desirable, and in fact enhances the neighbourhood character. However, houses on a given block should appear to 'fit' without abrupt changes in adjacent setbacks.

- Consistent front yard setbacks usually exist. New houses should respect the setbacks of the two adjacent houses on each side.
- Corner lot development should respond to both streetscapes; consideration should be given to the benefits of which street the front door should face.
- Off-street parking should be located so that vehicle access is from the back lane or side street.
- Where possible, a wider than minimum side yard should be provided to lend 'breathing room' between adjacent houses.

B. Architectural Character

Massing

Many heritage houses in Queen's Park have a minimum of two storeys with the second storey incorporated in the roof form to help reduce the apparent bulk of the building. Larger houses with two full-height storeys usually have dramatic or interesting roof shapes and details to 'relieve' the bulk of the building.

- Floor levels of houses should be expressed through the use of building elements such as porches, bay windows, dormers, and through setting upper floors back from the main floor.
- Appropriate building proportions should be used to ensure a consistent and balanced overall scale is achieved.
- Avoid designs which result in large, bulky buildings without any variety and modulation in form.
- Avoid building new houses from a slab-on-grade; the main floor should be 3 to 5 feet above grade.



Dormer facing street breaks up large sloped roof

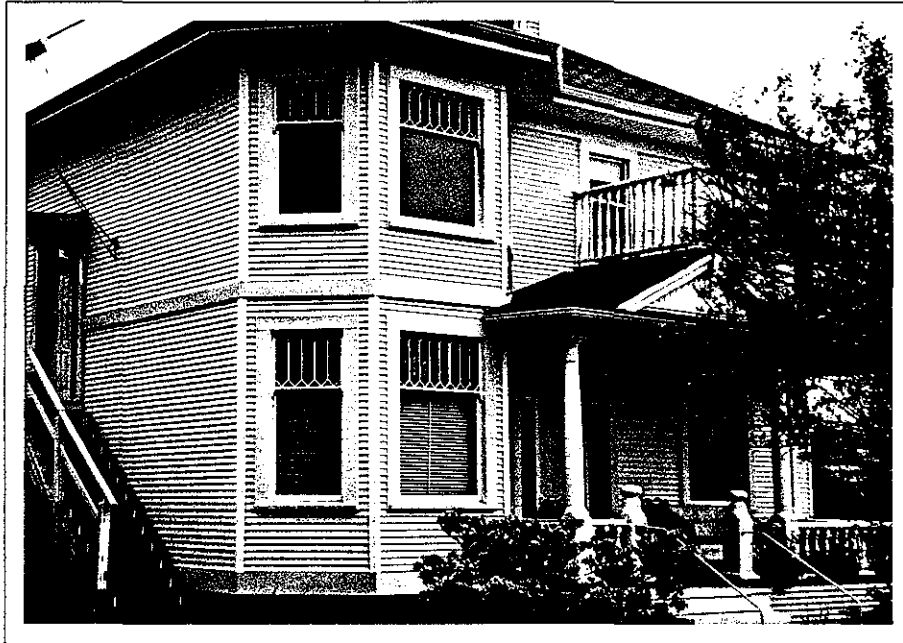


Roof details

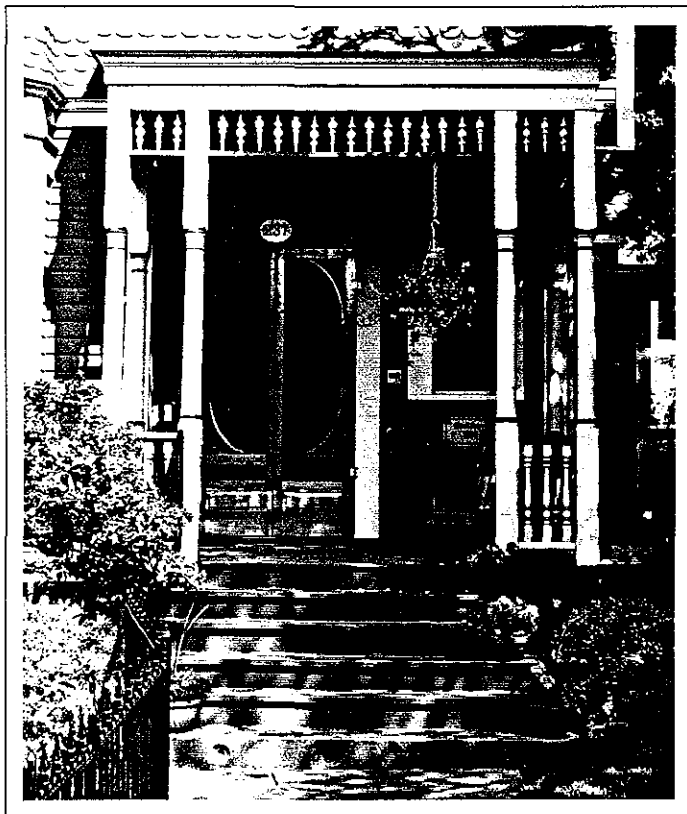
Roofs

Often similar roof shapes were used on houses on a street creating a consistent rhythm of rooflines.

- Traditional roof forms, such as a steep gable, should be used for both primary and secondary roof elements. Hipped, mansard, shed and gambrel roofs can also be used.
- In most cases, main gable ends or large dormers should face the street instead of unrelieved sloped roofs.
- Roof pitches should generally be steep, minimum of 9 in 12 for new houses; however, lower pitches can be used for porches and dormers.
- Addition roofs should match the style and slope of the original house roof.
- Flat roofs should not be used except for porches or as decks.
- Incorporate interesting elements including dormers, secondary roofs, and detail features such as brackets, open soffits, finials, fascias, etc.
- Secondary roofs over porches, projecting rooms and bay windows help to vary roof form and add visual interest to the roof profile.
- Roofs on corner-lot houses should be designed to respond to both streets; often the street corner is acknowledged with a special roof such as a turret or angled bay.
- Houses look better with wide generous roofs; overhangs should be a minimum of 24" for main roofs.
- Soffits can be 'open' to expose the rafters or 'closed' with trimwork, they are an opportunity for interesting details; avoid using pre-finished metal or vinyl soffits.
- Chimneys should be clad in the same material as that on the main house such as brick, stone and cedar shingles.
- Metal chimneys should not be exposed, enclose in a wood-framed chimney and clad; hide metal chimney caps with decorative screens or painted metal shrouds.



Traditionally proportioned windows



Well detailed porch enhances entrance



Entry trellis

Windows

The size, proportion, shape, location and number of windows all have important effects on the character of a house, especially in an historic district.

- Limiting the amount of total window area gives houses a traditional, substantial appearance.
- Avoid the use of extensive areas of glass facing the street; use groups of smaller windows, separated by wide mullions (min. 4", preferably 6").
- Vary window size according to function of room. (eg. larger window in living room, smaller window in bedrooms).
- Each face of the house should have windows which have simple, orderly, rectangular openings that are not necessarily symmetrical, but balanced; traditional windows are taller than they are wide.
- Small and/or unusual windows such as oval shaped, stained or bevelled glass can be effectively used to add visual interest to the house design.
- Windows should not appear flush with the exterior wall; recess the windows and use trims.
- Skylights are acceptable if only a few are used, their sizes small and they are not visible from the street; avoid 'plexiglass' raised bubble skylights.
- Glass block and wired glass are generally not suitable.

Entrances

The main entrance to a traditional house was often emphasized with the main floor raised above grade, a decorative front door, wide substantial stairs and integration with a generous front porch.

- The location of the main entrance should be at the front of the house with the entry door visible from the street; avoid garage doors overshadowing the entrance.
- If a front-facing entry is not possible, a gate or trellis can give a strong sense of entry to the property; and at the house, a porch or other design elements can 'signal' the location of the front door.
- Front doors should include either glazing in the door or sidelights next to the door to provide an opportunity for observation of visitors.



Front entry porch



New garage addition compliments house



New garage ties into character of heritage house

Porches

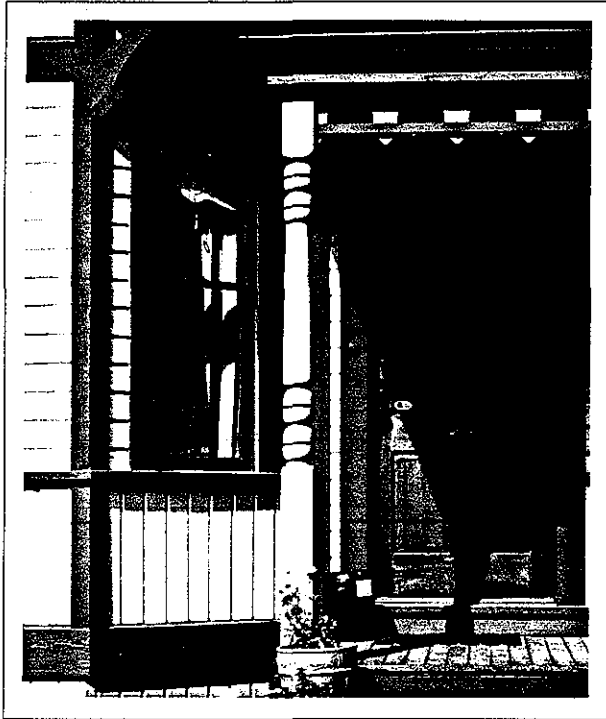
Porches are commonly found on neighbourhood houses. They are a key element in integrating a new house into the neighbourhood.

- Porches provide a semi-private outdoor space, sheltered from the weather, that encourages neighbourhood interaction and presents a friendly face to the street.
- Porches provide an opportunity for casual surveillance of street 'life'.
- A porch should be the primary element of the front facade of a house.
- The 'recessed space' porches provide at the lower part of the front facade give a comfortable balance to the main roof and add a repetitive feature to the street.
- If porches are to be enclosed, enclose with closed glazing, not solid walls, to provide traditional looking 'sun room'.
- Open up closed in porches to restore original facades.
- Porches present a good opportunity for wood detailing and adding interest to the overall design of the house.
- Front porches should be a minimum of 6 feet deep and be roofed.

Accessory Buildings / Additions

Accessory buildings such as garages, contribute to the variety of scale of the neighbourhood buildings. They should complement the style and character of the house they are associated with.

- Accessory buildings, decks and additions should have an architectural style, roof pitch, massing and finishes to match the main house so that the new work blends in.
- Garage options for lots with no back lane include; a garage in the basement of the house, a detached garage in the front yard (not permitted in the front yard setback) with the garage doors at 90 degrees to the street, and a detached garage in the back yard accessed by a driveway along the side of the house.
- Open carports should not be visible from the street and should have roofs to match the main house.



Detailing is characteristic of the neighbourhood houses



Details and ornamentation add architectural interest



Stucco used as infill material



Stone used at the base of house

- The effects of overshadowing and overlooking into a neighbour's private open space should be considered when adding an addition, deck or accessory building.
- Large open decks from second floors are unsightly and usually create privacy problems with the neighbours.

Details

Detailing and ornamentation are characteristic of the neighbourhood houses and should be used on new houses and additions to the same level of care and thoroughness as with existing houses.

- Substantial detailing and ornamentation is important to scale down large houses and to add architectural interest.
- Wide bargeboards with secondary trims and brackets and 'cut-outs' should be used to enhance the character of the roof edge.
- Windows and doors should be trimmed with wide casings often with secondary crowns and trims.
- Porches should be detailed with oversize columns and well detailed railings and stairs (ie. newel posts, turned balusters, fret work and lattice work).
- Building details should be considered an opportunity to extend the exterior colour scheme to smaller scaled elements.
- Details can also be overdone, avoid details not in keeping with the traditional style of the house.

Materials

New houses and additions should employ traditional and substantial materials. Materials should pass the 'touch test' whereby up close they look good and feel real.

- The most common exterior wall material is horizontal wood siding in 3 to 4in. widths. Wood shingle siding is also used; avoid vertical siding and vinyl or metal sidings.
- Stucco can be used as infill material between wood half timbering.
- If the entire house, or portions, are to be stucco, a traditional wet-dash or rough cast texture should be used.



Testing colour schemes on a renovation



Colour enhances the character and details of a house

- Wood is used for fascias, bargeboards, soffits, window and door trim; avoid metal or vinyl trim.
- Roofing should be asphalt or wood shingles (not shakes); avoid metal or tile roofing.
- Real stone and brick cladding is a very successful material to use, both for looks and durability.
- Metalwork such as railings, light fixtures, etc. should be traditionally finished in black, aged copper or brass. Avoid bright colours.
- Thin brick 'slices' are not acceptable but 'cultured' stone is, if used in a traditional manner and not of an overly 'fake' style not found in the neighbourhood.
- Juxtaposition of materials should be used to define the levels of a house. ie. stone base, siding for main levels and shingles for the upper floor and gable ends.
- Materials should not change at 'outside' corners, the look is more authentic if all sides are clad in a similar manner, or materials change at an 'inside' corner.

Colour

Colour was a critical aspect of traditional architecture. It was used to embellish and greatly enhance the character and details of a house. Working with colour schemes can be both rewarding and frustrating when "trying to get it right". Remember, "it's only paint".

- Some paint manufacturers have traditional colour schemes based on recognised historic palettes.
- A colour scheme should have a minimum of three colours; walls (field), trims and window sashes.
- Muted field colours with bolder colours for trim, or darker colours at the base and lighter above, often work well.
- Stronger colours should be used carefully to not overpower the house
- Traditionally wood was painted not stained natural colours. If using stains, use solid colours not transparent.
- Asphalt roof shingles are part of the colour scheme and should be considered carefully, when in doubt choose basic charcoal or lightly coloured shingles.



ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Queen Anne

- steep hipped roofs, tall decorative chimneys and bracketing
- varied roof forms with dominant front-facing gable
- numerous projecting features such as bay windows, turrets and porches
- basic horizontal wood cladding is often enhanced with panels or bands of decorative shingles or angled sidings, or stickwork

Italianate

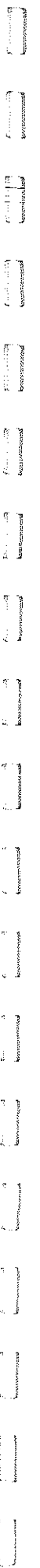
- derived from Renaissance palazzos of Italy
- basic rectangular plan shape with tall and narrow proportions
- hipped roof with narrow overhangs, cornices and extensive decorative bracketing
- often round headed windows
- horizontal wood cladding, wide drop siding most common

Georgian or Classical Revival

- characterized by solid, horizontal and symmetrical proportions
- medium-pitched hipped or gable roofs parallel to the street, with inset chimneys at each end
- balanced facades with centre entry door with sidelights and rounded transom windows
- openings were rectangular and windows small-paned
- classic, columned porticos, pedimented doorways and Greco-Roman moulding patterns

Edwardian or Foursquare

- simple cubic or box-like form, 2 or 2 ½ storeys, symmetrical in massing and detail
- low pitch, hipped roof often with a bell-cast or shallower-pitched roof at the eave
- may have central entry (Foursquare) or off-centre entry (“Edwardian Builder” variation)
- small dormers if there is an attic floor
- frequently with large porch
- earlier versions are undecorated
- single storey cottage-like examples can also be found



Edwardian Arts and Crafts

- similar to the Tudor Revival and Craftsman styles but with more classical overtones
- 1 ½ or 2 ½ storey with the top level within the roof form in large side-facing dormers
- steep, front-facing gabled roof often with small 'skirt' roof connecting the side eaves and forming a large triangular or pediment facade
- recessed or projecting, front porch with classical-style columns and trim details
- cladding expressed as base, middle and top (gable end) usually with different cladding at each level

Craftsman

- 1, 1 ½ or 2 storey cottage-like or bungalow form
- low-pitched gabled or hipped roofs with wide overhangs
- profuse use of plain wood details: exposed rafters and beams, eave brackets and braces
- wood clapboard, cedar shingles or wet-dashed stucco cladding
- porch supports over-sized and often short with sloping sides
- utilized rustic materials: cedar shingles, masonry, 'forged' hardware and art-glass windows

Tudor Revival

- strong Arts and Crafts movement influence with steep roofs usually with many gabled ends
- extensive half-timbering with rough-cast stucco infill
- masonry foundations, porch piers and large chimneys
- wood shingle or clapboard cladding detailed with heavy simple wood elements

Dutch Colonial Revival

- 1 or 1 ½ storey with a side gambrel roof
- small front porch with a central entry door and classical details
- usually wide horizontal bevel siding painted white

Spanish Revival

- 1 or 2 storeys with low-pitched gable or flat roofs clad often in terra-cotta roof tiles
- solid-looking massing derived from the masonry of Spanish missions and haciendas
- 'sculpted' stucco cladding often with a pronounced textured finish and rounded corners
- detailed with heavy wood turnings and beam-ends (vegas), and often decorative metalwork
- flat roofs often have articulated raised parapets with elaborate metal rain scuppers

There are other residential styles in the neighbourhood; from the 1940's Moderne, the 1950's Ranch and Modern styles, to the 1960's stock plans and the West Coast style of the 1970's. Many houses defy categorising as any one particular style. As with contemporary houses, houses of the past often combined elements from more than one pure style.

GLOSSARY

- baluster** - one of a row of vertical members supporting a handrail.
- bargeboard** - a plain or decorative board fixed beneath the eaves of a gable roof end.
- belvedere** - a small look-out tower or turret on a roof.
- brackets** - a projecting support from a wall, column or post, may be plain or elaborately scrolled.
- cladding** - exterior wall covering of one or more various materials.
- clapboard** - a thin board used to cover the exterior of framed buildings.
- cornice** - a projecting ornamental moulding along the top of a building, wall or arch.
- dentiles** - small projecting rectangles aligned in a row and spaced along a frieze board as part of a classical style cornice
- dormer** - a structure, usually containing windows, which projects from a sloping roof, has vertical sides, and a flat, shed, gable or other shape roof.
- drop siding** - horizontal boards with scoop or cove exposed along the top edge and tongue and groove or shiplap joints to adjacent boards
- eave** - the horizontal edge of a roof.
- facade** - the 'face' or side of a building.
- fascia** - a horizontal board which covers the rafter ends at the eaves of a roof.
- finial** - an ornamental feature placed on top of a pinnacle or roof peak.
- frieze** - a horizontal board at the top of an exterior wall at the intersection with the eave
- gable roof** - a peak formed with a single slope on either side of a ridge.
- gambrel roof** - a gable roof with two different slopes on either side of the ridge, ie. a 'barn' roof

- hip** - the angle formed by the intersection of two sloping roof surfaces.
- hipped roof** - a roof with surfaces sloping in four directions - can be pyramidal, ridged or have a flat portion on top.
- mansard roof** - a roof with very steep sides, often enclosing the upper floor area, and with either a flat or very shallow sloped main roof beyond.
- moulding** - a decorative finishing strip.
- newel** - the principal supporting post for a handrail at the bottom or angles of a staircase.
- parapet** - a low wall around a roof or deck.
- pediment** - a low-pitched triangular end or gable above a portico, door or window.
- shed roof** - a roof consisting of a single slope, ie. half a gable.
- soffit** - the underside of a structural component such as the enclosed underside of an overhanging eave or bay window
- stickwork** - the pattern of horizontal, vertical or diagonal boards raised from a wall surface or hung under a gable.
- watertable** - projecting horizontal band of either masonry or wood to deflect water away from the finishes below

