

SAINT JOHN HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREAS

Dormers

INTRODUCTION

Dormers visually enrich the roofscape while providing light and ventilation to upper floors and attics.

Dormers consist of a window, enclosing walls, and a roof. The shape, size, and ornamentation vary considerably.

The roof was often altered to provide extra space, to update the style, to provide Dormers or to simplify repairs. Examine the framing for evidence of any changes. At the same time, check the framing for signs of rot, deterioration and sagging. Fix any structural problems.

Periodically inspect your Dormers for signs of deterioration. Check the windows for signs of failure, as well as checking the roofing and siding. Inspect the flashings where the various surfaces of the dormer intersect the roof. Check inside for peeling paint, water stains or other signs of leaks. The flashings between the roof and adjacent materials or surfaces are the weakest point in most dormers. Any search for the source of leaks should start with the flashings.

DORMER STYLES

GEORGIAN pre 1800-1830

Simple peaked roof, with rectangular windows, late Georgian dormers often are ornate with classical trim, arched windows, are symmetrically located, often lined up with lower windows.



GREEK REVIVAL 1830 -1860

Rarely used.



GOTHIC REVIVAL 1850 - 1870

Plentiful, varied locations with steep pitched gable roofs. Are usually enlivened by finials, pinnacles, and decorative roof-edge "bargeboards". Window are narrow and vertical.



SAINT JOHN





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ITALIANATE 1850 - 1870



Have deep projecting eaves, supported by large wooden brackets on a wide cornice. Windows are arched.

MANSARD 1860 - 1880



Varied shapes, often exuberant, massive ornate trim. Are embellished with finials, urns, keystones other decorative features.

ROMANESQUE 1875 - 1895



Randomly located, with various types on one house. Enriched with delicate finials, terracotta panels.

QUEEN ANNE 1880 - 1900



Unusual shapes and locations. Decorative iron cresting, finials patterned and coloured shingles.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Consistency

If repairs are necessary on one of several dormers, maintain a similar appearance. Match the others when repairing the roofing, siding or window.



Adding a Dormer

The back, or an inconspicuous side, is the best location to add a dormer. If you add a dormer to the main facade, do so in keeping with the style of house. Consult with an expert before cutting into the structure of your roof. Windows in the gable end or a roof window (skylight) at the rear may be an alternate way to add light and ventilation to that attic space.

Removing a Dormer

Never remove or close up an original dormer. To do so will significantly alter the character of the house. Later, insensitive, dormer additions should be removed or altered to restore the original appearance of the house. Take care to not create any structural problems.

Replacing a Dormer

If your dormer is beyond repair, complete replacement is appropriate. Measure the existing carefully to permit duplication. Replicate the shape, dimensions, materials and style and rebuild the dormer in the same location, using the original design.



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Greek Revival Dormer | West Saint John

References

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Practical Conservation Guidelines, application forms for Grants and Certificates of Appropriateness and other useful information for fixing up your older building is available from:

Heritage Services | Growth and
Community Development Services
15 Market Square,
Saint John, New Brunswick | E2L 4L1
Phone: (506) 658 2838

Email: heritage@saintjohn.ca

Online: www.saintjohn.ca/heritage

Property Owners! Contact Heritage Staff before you begin to make any plan purchase supplies or hire contractors. Advice on ways to save you time, money and energy will be offered free of charge.