Buying a Landed Home: Test Redevelopment Claims First

Description

Do not price a landed home as though an extra storey, basement, side extension or subdivision is already available. First identify the exact landed-housing type and designated storey control, then have a qualified person test the net plot, road reserve, setbacks, platform level and permissible building envelope against current URA controls. A neighbourâ??s extension, an agent sketch or the existing gross floor area does not prove what the buyer can rebuild. URA prevailing planning controls for landed housing. URA clarifications on landed housing guidelines.

Choose the branch that matches the case

Situation	Next step
The price assumes an extra storey	Check the designated landed-housing area and the applicable height envelope before valuing it
A road widening or reserve line may affect the plot	Use the official plan and calculate on the net site after any required vesting
The house already exceeds current controls	Ask what existing work is approved and whether a new proposal can retain, alter or enlarge it
Subdivision is part of the pitch	Test each proposed plot against the current type, width, size, access and buffer rules

What the official record establishes

- URA prevailing planning controls for landed housing: URA publishes landed housing types, minimum plot dimensions, site coverage, setbacks and boundary-clearance controls, with road-category caveats.
- URA clarifications on landed housing guidelines: URA explains envelope control, designated two- and three-storey areas, measurement levels, road reserve lines, plot configuration and road buffers.

Identify the control row before using a number

URAâ??s current table separates detached, semi-detached, corner terrace and two terrace types, with different minimum plot dimensions, site coverage and setbacks. Match the actual lot and proposed work to the correct row. URA prevailing planning controls for landed housing.

Do not copy a setback from a nearby house. Road category, plot type, existing approval and special plans can change the result.

Measure from the controlling lines

Front, side and rear controls depend on the site boundary and, where relevant, the road reserve line. URA notes that category 2 roads use buffer requirements, while category 3 to 5 roads use the stated landed-housing control. URA prevailing planning controls for landed housing.

Ask the qualified person to mark the road reserve, boundary and proposed building line on the same dated plan. A marketing floor plan is not that evidence.

Test height inside the envelope

URA explains that the permissible envelope combines the designated two- or three-storey control, setbacks and the level from which height is measured. Existing bulk does not automatically create permission for a replacement of the same size. URA clarifications on landed housing guidelines.

Record the designated control from URA SPACE and the level assumption used by the qualified person. A verbal â??can build three storeysâ?• claim is incomplete without both.

Use net plot area for a subdivision idea

Where road, drainage or other vesting affects a site, a subdivision check must use the net plot configuration. Each proposed plot still needs to satisfy the relevant type, width, size, access and road-buffer controls.

A simple division of the title area by two is an owner calculation, not a subdivision approval.

Separate existing approval from future potential

Obtain approved plans for the current house and identify additions that are unauthorised, tolerated or approved under earlier controls. Then ask which parts a new application may retain and which must comply with current rules.

An old structure can be lawful without proving that the same footprint may be rebuilt today.

Build a residual-site worksheet

Start with the title area, then mark any road or drainage reserve, front setback, side and rear setbacks and protected areas. The unshaded remainder is only a first-pass footprint, not buildable floor area.

Label every dimension with its source and date. Do not multiply the remainder by a storey count until the envelope, coverage and professional design are checked.

Price two cases, not one promise

Create a base case that values the home in its current approved form and a redevelopment case using the qualified personâ??s documented assumptions. Subtract design, authority, demolition, financing, temporary accommodation and contingency costs from the second case.

The difference is an estimate of redevelopment value, not a guaranteed gain. Run a case where approval or usable area is lower than expected.

Give the professional a bounded question

Send the title plan, address, approved drawings, sellerâ??s proposed concept and the specific extension or rebuilding claim. Ask for the controlling plan, unresolved constraints, authority pathway and what cannot be concluded before a formal application.

A statement that redevelopment is â??subject to approvalâ?• is not enough for pricing. The buyer needs to know which assumption carries the largest downside.

Keep the OTP decision separate

A promising feasibility review does not settle title, financing, taxes, condition or contract risk. Put the redevelopment evidence beside the wider pre-purchase file and let the lawyer identify any assumption that belongs in the contract.

If the premium only makes sense under an unverified scheme, reduce the price, negotiate protection or walk away before the option fee becomes irreversible.

Work the example before the real decision

A terrace-house listing claims that a third storey will add 120 square metres. The buyer does not multiply that area by a neighbourhood price. A qualified person first checks the designated storey control, road reserve, platform level and permissible envelope, then produces a lower usable-area range. The buyer models the current house and the supported range separately.

Checklist

1. Identify the landed-housing type
2. Obtain title and approved plans

3. Check the designated storey control
4. Mark road reserve and setbacks
5. Test the net plot and envelope
6. Price a downside case before the OTP

Mistakes to avoid

- Copying a neighbourâ??s extension
- Using gross title area after vesting
- Treating existing bulk as rebuild permission
- Valuing an agent sketch as approved area
- Ignoring temporary housing and finance costs

Related next reads

After turn a sales claim about extension, rebuilding or extra floor area into a documented pre-offer check, a reader can choose the right land-title search, or prepare for a property stamp-duty decision.

Questions readers ask

Can an existing three-storey house always be rebuilt to three storeys?

No. Check the designated control, approvals and current envelope for the actual proposal.

Does a large title area prove subdivision potential?

No. Net plot configuration, type, width, access and buffers still apply.

Who should verify the concept?

Use an appropriately qualified professional and obtain the controlling records before pricing the claim.

Date Created
03/08/2026
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