

Architectural Roof Features Practice Note

*Further guidance on the implementation of Council's
Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan*



Background

The roof of a building comprises a strong visual element within built form design and makes a significant contribution to the areas streetscape. Roof design within tall buildings increasingly influences the visual character of an area as this is a more visually prominent and often becomes a key landmark within the townscape. Accordingly, the consideration of architectural roof features is particularly important in the overall visibility and impacts of a building within its context.

Within the Standard Instrument Order Local Environmental Plan 2006, (SI LEP) maximum heights of buildings are specified to the highest point of the building, which can result in flat roofed buildings with little articulation features. Purely functional, flat roof forms, with protruding lift over runs or service plant rooms, have poor visual interest and contribution to the streetscape. Similarly, retro-fitted roof features that have little architectural relation to the existing building also lead to poor outcomes.

In response, an 'optional' clause from the SI LEP has been included in the Tweed Local Environmental Plan to encourage visually interesting and harmonious roofscapes and skylines. Clause 5.6 reads as follows:

5.6 Architectural roof features [optional]

- (1) *The objectives of this clause are as follows:*
 - (a) *to provide high quality urban form for all buildings,*
 - (b) *to provide flexibility in building height to promote architectural merit and visual interest of roof forms.*
- (2) *Development that includes an architectural roof feature that exceeds, or causes a building to exceed, the height limits set by clause 4.3 may be carried out, but only with development consent.*
- (3) *Development consent must not be granted to any such development unless the consent authority is satisfied that:*
 - (a) *the architectural roof feature:*
 - (i) *comprises a decorative element on the uppermost portion of a building, and*
 - (ii) *is not an advertising structure, and*
 - (iii) *does not include floor space area and is not reasonably capable of modification to include floor space area, and*
 - (iv) *will cause minimal overshadowing, and*
 - (b) *any building identification signage or equipment for servicing the building (such as plant, lift motor rooms, fire stairs and the like) contained in or supported by the roof feature is fully integrated into the design of the roof feature.*

Design Principles for Architectural Roof Features

Design Principle 1 - Townscape

- Roof design should generate an interesting skyline and enhance views from adjoining developments.
- Include roof top features to improve the overall building form and scale in a townscape context.

Design Principle 2 - Building Form & Architectural Merit

- All architectural roof features are to integrate with the overall building form design.
- Lift over-runs and service plants should be concealed within well designed roof structures.

Design Principle 3 - Building Performance

- Facilitate the use or future use of the roof for sustainable functions, for example rainwater tanks, photovoltaic cells, water features and green roofs.
- Consider using architectural roof features to provide greater passive environmental design components, such as access to natural light and to assist stack ventilation.

Design Principle 4 - Good Neighbour Considerations

- Suitable setbacks, screening and other means are to be used to ensure appropriate levels of privacy are maintained to adjoining properties.
- Outdoor recreation areas on flat roofs should be landscaped and incorporate shade structures and wind screens to encourage use.
- Where there are no impacts upon adjoining properties, tennis courts and other recreation areas are encouraged on flat roofs, however, fences and pavilions on the roof should be carefully designed to integrate with building design and materials.



Architectural roof feature examples

Top: The Soul tower projects the strong vertical lines of the building into the skyline, whilst the nearby Hilton tower includes a shade structure to complete the architectural design. These developments improve the urban townscape through providing visual interest and a response to the building scale.

Middle: The AICS Multi-Purpose Hall projects the roofline forward, providing a covered outdoor space as the landform falls away. Whilst the roof projection provides increased functionality to the development, it also assists in creating an improved built form scale and proportion.



Bottom: The Calmvale Tavern extends the skillion roof covering the pedestrian entrance beyond the width of the pathway. This roof feature provides a strong street address and legibility within the streetscape whilst also seeking to respond to the sites climatic conditions.

