

## *Six things you need to know about house raising before you start*

- **The house raising or house lifting process and how it will impact your life**

The steps in the house lifting process are as follows;

- Make contact with potential contractors
- Select a contractor,
- Get a site analysis including opportunities and constraints
- Agree scope of works, including existing building condition and timing
- Agree insurance arrangements with all parties
- Sign contract including quoted cost
- Consider site options, design height and orientation
- Obtain preliminary design and engineering advice
- Gain owner or builder approval
- Confirm final design, staging and project costs
- Mobilize, site preparations and disconnect services
- Undertake the house lifting works
- Coordinate with other trades
- Install final structural works and concreting
- Arrange certification and approvals if required
- Complete and demobilize

- **Cost to raise a house and risk of extra costs**

- The cost of lifting and the new structural supports are included in the contract
- Costs may vary if changes to scope, orientation or location are agreed.
- Unexpected ground conditions such as excavation in rock can result in additional costs. Initial site investigation to determine the subsurface conditions will avoid this risk.
- Additional costs can arise if the existing structure of the house is flawed. A thorough dilapidation report will document the condition of the existing structure and allow any make good costs to be included in the overall price.
- The dilapidation report also provides a valuable reference in case of any perceived or actual damage resulting from the lifting process.
- During the lifting process the existing structure will move and some minor cracking may result. This will be more marked if your house is not level prior to lifting. The dilapidation report will identify any issues and a decision can be made to relevel or to retain the existing conditions to minimise cracking. This may be particularly important if you have recently installed a new kitchen or bathroom.
- At Pro-Jax we prefer to partner with our clients to avoid surprises and ensure costs are well understood at the earliest opportunity. We are confident that our dilapidation report will identify any issues and your building will not be damaged as a result of our work.

- **Design opportunities and maximising the return on your investment**

- Deciding to raise your house is a big decision and represents a significant investment for most families.
  - It is also an opportunity to change the orientation or even the location of the house on the block to enhance a view, capture the breeze or create an opportunity for other development.
  - We encourage our clients to consider the opportunities at the beginning of the process by undertaking a site analysis which we will document in a site assessment report. This report will identify key opportunities to ensure these are understood and design work is appropriately informed.
- **Engineering, certification and approvals**
    - Generally, the raising of the house is part of a larger project to renovate or upgrade the house with certification and approvals undertaken as part of the overall project. Specific inspections at key stages such as excavation, services and steel work prior to concreting will be coordinated with main contractor and certifiers.
    - Pro-Jax provide an integrated engineering service that ensures structural stability during the lifting process and at design height. Alternatively, we can coordinate with project engineering consultants if preferred.
    - If the house lifting process is a stand-alone project that will be followed by other building works in the future, Pro-Jax can arrange the necessary certification and approvals for lifting works and any associated stairs or access ways.
    - If the house is to be relocated on the block to facilitate additional development, planning approvals maybe required. Pro-Jax can coordinate with your planning consultant or engage a consultant to make a development application if required.
- **Insurances and responsibilities**
    - Generally, domestic insurance policies will not cover your house while major construction works are being undertaken.
    - It is a mistake to assume that the contractor's insurance will cover your house while it is being lifted. Unless specific arrangements are made with the contractor, the contractor's insurance will only cover the value of the work being undertaken, leaving your house uninsured in the event of a storm, fire or flood.
    - Importantly, this issue must be resolved before work starts. If required, Pro-Jax can arrange additional cover for your house while the lifting works are being undertaken.
- **Contractor licenses, experience and track record.**
    - Not all building licenses are equal. Some contractor's hold limited licences that allow specific works to be undertaken. It is important to understand the type of licence that contractors hold so that there is no misunderstanding.
    - The Pro-Jax team are master craftsmen with many years' experience and winners of local, state and national awards recognising housing projects completed in Townsville and Brisbane. Consequently, we understand the entirety of the building works that will follow the lifting.