



A Moving Experience

Budget and high-end home
relocations compared



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A Moving Experience

Introduction

Whether you've fallen in love with a house and just have to have it, plan to flip it for a quick profit, or intend to buy it as a long-term investment, relocating a house is an exciting adventure.

It doesn't matter if you're working with a tight budget or aiming for a high-end dream home with all the bells and whistles; whichever way you go, the process and the outcome can be incredibly satisfying and financially rewarding.

Budget vs high-end: contrasting relocation approaches

When we talk about a high-end house, we're not talking about a house of superior structural integrity. All houses slated for relocation must meet specific criteria to ensure they can withstand the stress of the move and be safely transported to their new location. Any reputable house removal company will ensure that the house you plan on relocating is up to that standard, so in that respect, it's immaterial whether your relocatable house will be a budget or a high-end project.

The most significant factor in determining cost and outcome will be the level of renovation and customization desired. This is where the differences between a budget relocation and a high-end relocation come into play.

A high-end relocation may involve moving and restoring a house to its former beauty, preserving its original heritage condition or upgrading a basic relocatable house to a more luxurious level. This typically requires moderate to extensive renovations and customizations or smaller, more detailed renovations to specific areas to achieve a particular look. For heritage homes, the focus may be on preserving the home's unique character, features and architecture.

Renovations may include:

- Structural changes.
- Installing new flooring.
- Adding or altering functional areas such as kitchens and bathrooms.
- Installing custom cabinetry and high-tech appliances.
- Adding premium fixtures and fittings or expanding the number of fixtures and fittings.

Most relocation projects aiming for a high-end result or a quick renovation flip will also pay attention to the façade of the house, so painting, rendering, and adding or repairing decorative elements become an essential part of that process.

High-end relocation projects might also involve ensuring the house is visually balanced in its new location. Visually balancing a house means creating a sense of harmony and proportion between the different elements of the house's exterior. This includes the placement of windows, doors, and other architectural features, as well as the use of colour and texture.

The goal of visually balancing a house is to create an aesthetically pleasing and cohesive appearance where no single element overwhelms or detracts from the overall look of the house. This can be achieved through careful design and planning of additions, alterations or removal of elements.

It centres around visual techniques such as symmetry, asymmetry, and repetition. It can be as big a job as adding a new garage or as small and detailed as ensuring the letterbox matches the style and quality of the relocated and newly renovated house. The end result is a beautiful home that meets the highest standards of comfort and style while looking like it was always meant to end up in this location.

In contrast, a budget relocation usually involves retaining as much of the original structure and features as possible to minimise costs. This typically involves sourcing budget-friendly fixtures and fittings, repairing damaged elements, and undertaking only essential renovations. The result is a functional, liveable house that may not have all the high-level upgrades of a premium renovation but still provides a comfortable living space that perfectly suits the needs of the homeowners.

However, a budget relocation has the potential to become a high-end relocation if the owners choose to live in the house and gradually renovate it over many years, as their funds allow, eventually transforming it into their dream high-end home.

Regardless of whether it's a budget or high-end relocatable project, the cost and quality of the outcome can vary widely based on numerous factors. So, let's take a closer look at two relocatable houses: one done on a tight budget with cost as the primary focus and another done with more financial flexibility and an emphasis on achieving a high-end result.

Case Study #1 – The Cottage: Budget House Relocation

The first case study involved relocating a budget cottage. This particular house was acquired for free from a development site. Property owners looking to build new or developers wishing to subdivide or develop a site often offer such properties for free since it would otherwise cost them to demolish the house and dispose of the waste. This arrangement benefits everyone involved, as not only does someone get a house for free, but it's also an environmentally friendly and cost-effective solution that promotes the circular economy.

The cottage was a two-piece house relocation, which involved dividing the house into two sections for transportation and then reassembling it at the new site. The main focus of this project was to keep costs low by only undertaking essential renovations, and so one of the key features of this relocation was that the cottage's original features were retained. This included the roof, original kitchen, carpet floor coverings, timber windows, front veranda, front door, and stained-glass windows.

Any damaged weatherboards were repaired, and budget fixtures and fittings were sourced and utilised to keep costs down. In addition, no external cosmetic renovations were undertaken, and no landscaping or exterior amenities were constructed. As a result, the overall cost of this relocation was significantly lower than that of a high-end relocation.

Case Study #2 – Dream Home: High-End House Relocation

The second case study was the dream home. This relocation was done with much looser purse strings and with the focus on achieving something beautiful, functional and high-end.

The house was a four-piece relocation, which means it was divided into four sections, with each section transported to the new location and then reassembled on-site. The house was also free because it was relocated from a development site. However, unlike the budget relocation of the cottage, this house underwent extensive renovations both inside and outside, resulting in a complete transformation. Internally, the plumbing and wiring were replaced, and the floor plans were changed, requiring the removal of walls and the addition of structural beams.

All of the flooring was removed and replaced, as were the kitchen and bathrooms. High-end fixtures and fittings were sourced and utilised throughout. Furthermore, the house received new window furnishings and a new coat of paint to freshen up the look.

Externally, the brown stained timber facade, dark roof and black window trims dated the house. To modernise and enhance its appearance, the facade was repainted, and new cladding was installed. The old roof and guttering were removed and replaced with a new silver roof to match the newly updated silver window trims.

In addition to the extensive external makeover, the façade was dramatically changed by adding an impressive entrance foyer and building a new verandah. This visually balanced the house and gave it a new and stately presence that was further enhanced through landscaping.

Driveways were installed, instant turf was laid, and beautiful bluestone paving was put down. To perfect and set off the look, carefully chosen foliage was planted at the front of the house. The result was a completely transformed dream home with a high-end finish.

Comparison of the Budget and High-End Relocations

Costs

When comparing the budget and high-end relocations, there are several key differences to consider. Firstly, the budget relocation focused on retaining the cottage's original features and only undertaking essential renovations. This meant that the project's overall cost was significantly lower than the high-end relocation of the dream home.

On the other hand, the high-end relocation involved extensive internal and external renovations and landscaping, so the entire cost of the project was significantly higher than the budget relocation. However, long-term financial benefits must be considered when comparing costs. In this case, although the high-end house had a higher initial cost, it's likely to have a better resale value, making it a more valuable investment in the long run.

Time

As with any construction project, the timeline can vary greatly depending on the level of work involved. In the case of the budget relocation, a combination of DIY and trades were used. Because the focus was on repairing and retaining existing features, it was a time-consuming process. Painstakingly repairing sections requires meticulous attention compared to ripping something out and replacing it. Adding to the timeline, renovation progress occurred whenever time and resources allowed, leading to an inconsistent and relatively slow pace compared to the high-end renovation. Consequently, this project took about two years from start to finish.

In contrast, the owners of the dream home prioritised achieving a high-end outcome rather than sticking to a tight budget. They had the luxury of hiring professional tradespeople as needed rather than relying on DIY. Despite the extensive scope of renovations and customisations, the timeline was streamlined, efficient, and consistent due to the absence of financial constraints in sourcing resources or engaging professionals. This facilitated a smooth and steady pace, leading to completion of the project in just six months.

Level of finish

Another differentiating factor between the two relocations was the level of finish achieved. The budget relocation opted for affordable fixtures and fittings, which were suitable for the project's budgetary constraints, but did not result in the same level of quality seen in the high-end relocation. Additionally, it's worth noting that the budget relocation did not include any structural additions or comprehensive landscaping, which limited the extent to which the house was transformed. While the budget project focused on repairing and retaining existing features, the absence of external landscaping meant that the property's kerb appeal was not significantly enhanced.

In contrast, not only did the high-end project use premium materials, finishes, and fittings to create an upmarket ambience, but it also included comprehensive landscaping and external structures, which further enhanced the overall appearance and value of the property. Compared to the budget project, they were able to create a more unified, contemporary finish, with a seamless transition between the interior and exterior living spaces, significantly increasing the property's street appeal.

Level of expertise

Whether it's a budget relocation or a high-end relocation, both require a reasonable level of expertise. While both budget and high-end relocations require skilled professionals to handle the transportation and construction process, the high-end relocation involved using more specialised expertise, such as architects, interior designers, and professional landscaping companies. Of course, this added to the costs but it also enhanced the outcome.

In summary

Overall, comparing a budget relocation to a high-end relocation involves considering a variety of factors, from the quality of the build to the timeline of the project to the level of expertise required.

It's important to remember that the choice between a budget and a high-end relocation ultimately depends on individual circumstances and goals, and neither approach is superior to the other. While a budget relocation might be the better choice for those with limited resources, aiming for a modest outcome when you have the funds for a high-end project would be a missed opportunity to create a truly exceptional living space.

On the other hand, attempting a high-end finish without the necessary budget could lead to disappointment and financial strain. By carefully considering your priorities and resources, you can make an informed decision about the best approach to take to achieve an outcome that meets your goals and expectations.

Further considerations when relocating a house as a budget or high-end project

In addition to the factors already discussed, there are several other areas to consider when comparing budget and high-end relocatable houses in general.

Energy efficiency and sustainability

High-end relocatable house projects often incorporate features such as rainwater harvesting, solar panels, smart home technology, ducted air conditioning, and energy-efficient appliances to minimise energy usage and reduce environmental impact. While budget relocatable projects may have some of these features, they are less likely to have them all, resulting in a home that is less energy efficient.

That being said, it's worth noting that the budget project's focus on repairing and retaining existing features, fixtures, and fittings is a sustainable approach in its own right. Additionally, because the high-end project involved removing and replacing many areas, the budget house can be considered a more environmentally friendly approach to relocating and renovating.

Customisation

High-end relocatable houses may offer a wider range of customisation options than budget houses since they are not limited by budget. This can include custom floor plans, personalised interior design, and unique exterior features. On the other hand, the budget approach often requires making do with the existing floor plan and design, with any changes made likely to be simple and focused on adapting to the house rather than changing the layout to fit your lifestyle. While this may come with some inconveniences, it is worth noting that because the budget approach costs less, it is a more accessible option for many people.

Project management

The approach to project management can differ significantly between budget and high-end relocatable house projects. With a budget project, the owner may need to take a more hands-on approach to project management, as they are responsible for sourcing and utilising budget fixtures and fittings. In this case, having the confidence and knowledge to research, source and supply everything needed to complete the project with little help from professionals is essential. They also need to either possess the necessary skills and knowledge to use the resources and supplies effectively or have the ability to acquire those skills.

On the other hand, a high-end project may have a project manager or interior designer overseeing the project, ensuring that high-quality materials and finishes are used and the desired wow factor is achieved. While using a project manager can add to the project's cost, valuable expertise is provided, and the homeowner's time is freed up.

Ultimately, the decision to use a project manager depends on budget and time constraints as well as the level of confidence the owner has in their ability to manage the project themselves.

Resale value and long-term investment

We've touched on this already, but it's worth recapping and elaborating on. Although a budget relocation project may offer immediate cost savings, a high-end house may be a better long-term investment in terms of resale value and overall enjoyment of the property.

However, while the level of customisation and premium materials and finishes in the high-end house greatly contributes to the higher resale value, a budget house that has been well-maintained and retains original features may also have good resale value. Additionally, though a high-end house may include extensive landscaping and structural changes that immediately raise its resale value, a budget relocation can add at least some of those assets over time and as money allows.

Ultimately, whether it's a high-end house or a budget house, making sure the property is neat and tidy internally and externally and making simple, cost-effective improvements to the facade and front yard can significantly increase its street appeal and lead to a higher resale price.

Conclusion

I trust this book has helped you gain a better insight into the pros and cons of each approach and equipped you with the knowledge and insights you need to navigate a relocation project confidently.

In the end, whether you opt for a budget-friendly relocation or a more elaborate high-end relocation and renovation, there are a lot of factors to consider. Your approach to a relocation project will depend on your priorities, skills, knowledge, preferences, available time, budget, motivations and goals, and the type of house you relocate. By exploring different approaches and considering everything you have learnt, you can make a decision that best suits your goals and resources.

Every decision you make is an opportunity to bring new life and personality to your home, and every relocation is as individual as the house and its owner. What you create out of that relocation is up to you. So go forth with confidence and creativity, and enjoy the process of transforming your new space into a place you'll love to call home.

Good luck and have fun on the journey.

