



“This is a house where airconditioning is the last resort”

What goes around, comes around

You can still have the house of your dreams without changing the streetscape, writes **Robyn Willis**



The main bedroom suite is positioned above the dining and living area.

Sometimes a house works so well, it looks effortless. For visitors to this house at Rodd Point, the layout just makes sense, with a natural break between the old part of the house and the new, as well as plenty of space for its growing family.

Architect Mark Szcerbicki says there were several design options open to him under the Complying Development legislation, which cuts council approval times down to a couple of weeks, but he decided to take the least intrusive approach for a couple of reasons.

“We could have knocked down this Californian bungalow and started again but instead, we chose to hide as much of the new work from the street as possible,” Mark says.

“The couple before them had been in the house for 50 years so it had a homely character and there was a sense of a family growing up there which convinced us to keep the house.”

Futureproofing

The new owners wanted space for their growing family — now and into the future.

Mark maintained and restored the original part of the house while adding a secondary gable directly above it to create bedrooms for the three young children.

“The bedrooms are positioned under the sloping roof,” he says. “We tried to make sure the three kids’ bedrooms are equal in size but they are still little, so we’ll see.”

The new extension was also two storeys. Downstairs, there is an articulated open-plan design including the kitchen, dining and living areas leading on to an alfresco space and barbecue area and pool.

Upstairs is the generous parents’ suite with bedroom, walk-in robe and ensuite.

“As you come up the stairs, there is a link or

The two-way fireplace provides heating in the open-plan space while recycled bricks from the demolished part of the house are on display in the dining room.



THE SOURCE

- Landscape architect** Melissa Wilson, melissawilson.com.au
- Dining chairs** No. 18 Thonet chair in black and natural sock, thonet.com.au
- Dining room pendant light** Gubi Ronde pendant from Cult, cultdesign.com.au
- Outdoor dining table** Manutti Air table from Cosh Living, coshliving.com.au
- Outdoor dining chairs** Tait Volley chairs, madebytait.com.au
- Kitchen timber feature wall and bedroom feature wall** Painted in Taubmans Black Fox, taubmans.com.au
- Bed** Neo bed in grey from King Living, kingliving.com.au
- Dining table** Leap dining table from Fanuli, fanuli.com.au

bridge with the parents' suite to one side and the kids' bedrooms to the other," Mark says. Given the front of the house faces north, drawing light into the back of the house was going to be a challenge. Mark used the natural break between the old house and the new work as his inspiration, inserting an internal courtyard on the eastern side of the site. "Putting in a central courtyard has made the main living area quite open," Mark says. "We worked closely with the landscape architect to achieve the integration of the indoor spaces and the landscaping." Indeed, landscape architect Melissa Wilson spoke to the clients about how they liked to live, creating spaces where they could relax while still supervising the kids in the pool as well as constructing a kitchen garden. "We were so happy with the collaboration with the landscape architect," Mark says. "She put in sandstone steps to get the family out the front of their house so they could talk to the neighbours and interact with the street."

PROJECT

Owners

A family with three young children

Architect

Mark Szczerbicki
markszczerbicki.com

The problem

An older house too small for a growing family's needs

The site

An almost level block with a Californian bungalow

Design

To go up and out without being visible from the street

How long did it take

Six months to design
Just over a year to build

Above and beyond

Aside from creating good solar access, Mark says the owners were keen to make the house as sustainable as possible. Bricks removed when the back of the house was demolished have been reused in the new work and are on show in the new dining area. Mark increased insulation and installed ceiling fans to keep temperatures lower in the bedrooms upstairs and while Basix required them to install a 2000-litre rainwater tank, they went for a 6000-litre tank instead. They have also installed solar panels on the roof. A double-sided fireplace ensures the house will be comfortable all year round.

Pictures Tom Ferguson



The modern extension is not visible from the street while the house fits in with its neighbours.