

**FACT FILE**

**THE ARCHITECT**

James McNally,  
McNally Architects

**THE BRIEF**

To design an extension for a traditional Victorian home that will offer flexibility for a growing family

**THE BUILDER**

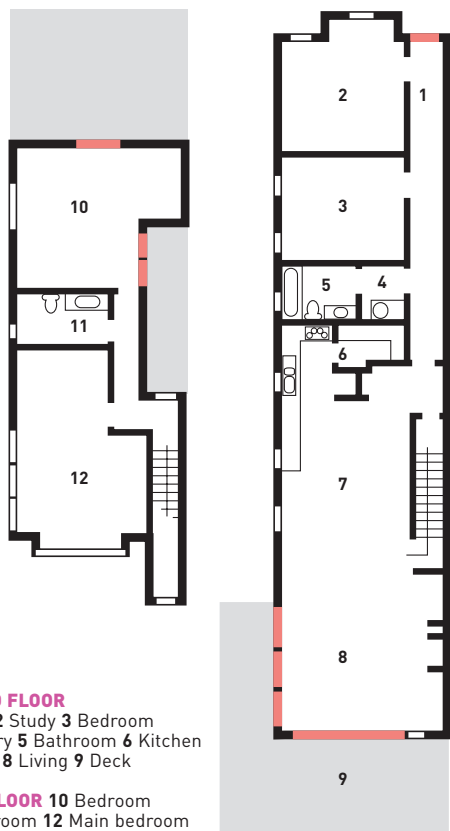
Brett Burns Constructions



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home@dailytelegraph.com.au

# ROAD TO SUCCESS

Having worked with Leichhardt Council before, James McNally understood the need to design within the guidelines and keep the lines of communication open at all times



Not many architects walk away from council chambers with a smile on their face. For increasing numbers, submitting plans for approval has become a battle of wills as councils insist on imposing their guidelines to the last degree. But James McNally of McNally Architects has achieved the seemingly impossible.

Just nine weeks after submitting the Development Application to extend this Annandale home to Leichhardt Council in Sydney's inner west, the extension was approved.

"We have done several houses within the Leichhardt Council area so I am quite aware of the issues they are interested in," says James.

"This home is in a heritage conservation area and the concern is mainly about the streetscape. They like to see extensions as secondary to the main house."

**Potential plus**

A friend of the owners, James was invited to view the house before it was purchased.

He immediately saw the potential in the north-facing living area, even though a previous extension, housing service areas, blocked light and access to the rear.

"We had this big north-facing wall that would get a lot of sun

from the morning all the way through the day. If we could capture that and bring it into the space, that would be ideal," says James.

A small yard at the rear offered enough room for play and entertaining and, given its elevated position, there was the possibility of district views from a new upper floor.

**Growing need**

"The owners really liked the area and the schools and the location to their work in the city, and they had a lot of friends in the area," says James.

Even so, they were concerned that their home would not meet their needs and those of their two young daughters as they grew.

"Open plan is good in the short-term because it is good to keep an eye on the kids, but then down the track they will want a bit of space," says James.

In such a high-demand area, they also had one eye on the real estate market and were careful to include the kinds of features – such as clean lines, white interiors and multiple bathrooms – that buyers of renovated homes were looking for.

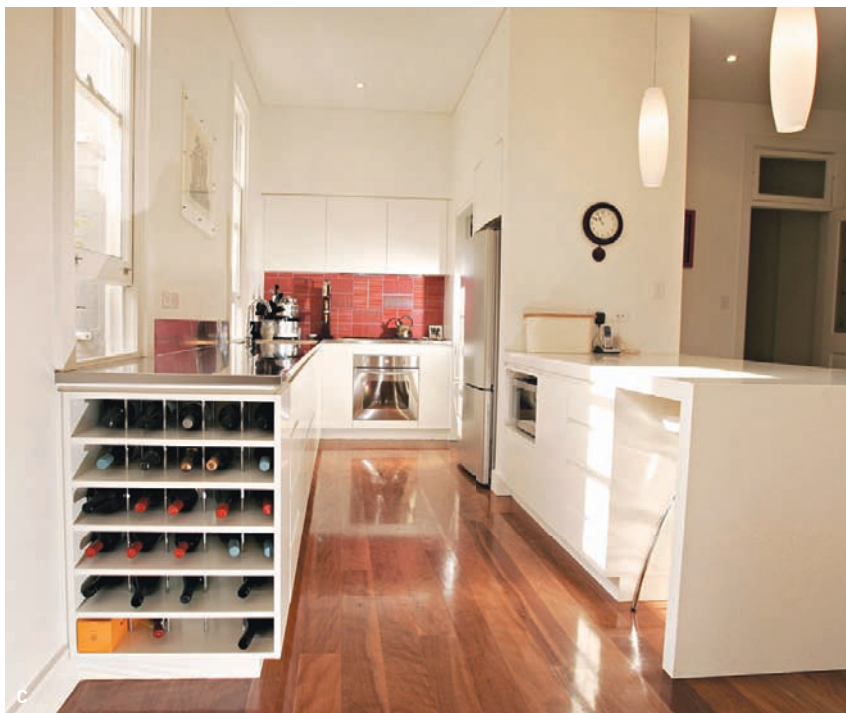
As it stood, the single-level house had three bedrooms with a central living area at the rear.

**BUDGET**

<b>KITCHEN</b>	
Cupboards	\$20,000
Stainless steel benchtop with integrated sink	\$2700
Stone benchtop	\$2400
Appliances	\$4200
Feature tiles	\$85
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,385</b>

PHOTOS BOB BARKER

# GET THE LOOK



## LIGHT TOUCH

The finishes in this kitchen have been kept deliberately simple to ensure it does not date. To complete the effect, the owners chose simple light fittings. For something similar, check out the range of Sky pendant lights available from Beacon Lighting. Made from glass and brushed chrome, they are 45cm long and come in mint green, black, red or white. At \$69.95 each, you can afford to be generous and buy a few.



● **MORE INFORMATION** Beacon Lighting,



**A** James McNally **B** The new extension **C** A stainless steel work area features in the kitchen **D** The north-facing bathroom **E** The main bedroom

## RACK RECORD

This kitchen has been designed down to the last detail with an integrated rangehood, sink and wine rack included. If you are just starting to collect wine or storage space is limited, consider buying wine rack modules from Howards Storage World, which can then be extended as the collection grows. The Chateau wine rack is \$39.95 and holds 16 bottles. It is made of plastic and comes in black or silver.



● **MORE INFORMATION** Howards Storage World, hsw.com.au

## Decent proposal

After running through a number of options, James proposed a first-floor addition set back from the street, which would provide two large bedrooms and a family bathroom. This scenario works well, as the two girls are still quite young and happy to share a room and their parents are close by.

Later, says James, the girls could move downstairs into their own separate rooms and use the second bathroom, which was once the third bedroom.

The main bedroom has been located at the rear of the upper floor, while the bathroom benefits from north-facing light.

Once the children move downstairs, the upper floor could become a full-blown parents' retreat.

Downstairs, the new extension has made way for a new kitchen, dining and living area.

An all-white affair punctuated by vibrant red tiles, the kitchen includes an expansive CaesarStone benchtop for receiving guests or supervising homework, while the work area is stainless steel.

An integrated wine rack facing on to the dining table holds a surprisingly large number of bottles.

"We kept the look minimal with shark-nose profile on the drawers. It is not a huge space so we did not want it to stand out too much or to use materials that will date," says James.

The bright white kitchen is softened by wide blackbutt floorboards, which lead to a L-shaped deck. James describes this as a transition space between indoors and out, with ventilation provided by large timber sliding doors and louvred windows.

"You can open the louvres completely and get 100

per cent ventilation – unlike the old sash windows that offer 50 per cent access at best. But the owners wanted to keep the original windows and contrast it with a contemporary extension," says James.

Council, too, were very concerned about maintaining the original structure where possible.

## Time to talk

With this in mind, he set up a number of meetings with council prior to submitting the DA. This can often flag possible problems early and save time and money in the long run.

"We needed to get into council with early sketches so they can see you are a real person not just an application. You need to keep them informed the whole way through. They are planners rather than architects so they do not always understand why things are done a certain way," says James.

It is a process that has worked out well for the homeowners. With four bedrooms, two bathrooms and multiple dining and living areas, the home feels larger than its 180sq m block indicates. And, says James, it is a residence that will meet the needs of the family for some time to come.

"There is enough growth here to last another 10 years, which is a good plan if you can get it." ■

**ROBYN WILLIS**

● **MORE INFORMATION** Brett Burns Construction Pty Ltd 0414 283 004  
McNally Architects 9319 6600,  
mcnallyarchitects.com.au

## FRENCH CONNECTION

Architect James McNally has designed this home for entertaining inside and out and the deck has already become a popular dining spot. The outdoor dining setting has a relaxed French feel with the combination of metal chairs and timber table. For similar chairs, look no further than Le Forge's Bistro chair. Available in several finishes, they are priced at \$355 each for galvanised chairs, which are suitable for outdoor use.



● **MORE INFORMATION** Le Forge, 9516 3888, leforge.com.au