

SATURDAY

The Daily Telegraph

home

February 21, 2015

Of stone and wood

How an old terrace embraced its past **12**



Q&A The Block's Ayden and Jess **14** **Display** The Sienna 269 **18**





Renovate

The brief

To simplify an unworkable floorplan, create a more inviting main bedroom and make the most of the available outdoor living space.



ARCHITECT
James McNally
mcnallyarchitects.com.au

BUILDER
JPG Construction
0408 600 527

THE SOURCE
Flooring Tongue n Groove
tonguegrooveflooring.com.au
Tiles Onsite Supply & Design
onsitesupply.com

Breaking dawn on a new era

The sun finally shines on a beautiful beachside residence, writes **Robyn Willis**

The beauty of old houses is that they come with their own stories. They have a sense of permanence and even confidence about their place in the street and the local area.

One of the biggest challenges, though, is that they can become money pits that require expensive and disruptive work.

Time to act

The owners of this late Victorian terrace in the beachside suburb of Balmoral knew that something had to be done.

One of a pair of houses on a steep site, it had a confused layout on the upper level where the kitchen, living and dining spaces were located.

Entry for the stairs to the lower level was in the middle of the floor, while the three bedrooms downstairs were dark and completely uninviting.

While the house had been renovated 10 years ago, architect James McNally says it was more of a fitout and had not addressed some of the maintenance needed on a house of this age, with the roof and many of the walls and floors requiring attention.

The owners wanted to retain the character of the house while making it more in keeping with a property just 200m from the beach.

Key to this plan was the need to get more natural light into the house, ideally from the northern side of the house.

But the northern side was the shared wall so James needed to look at other ways of drawing light into the house.

James decided to tackle the problem in several ways. On the upper floor where the living spaces were positioned, he simplified the layout to make it more open plan and moved the stairs to the side of the space.



“The stairs are now on the boundary wall with a skylight over them that follows the form of the stairs,” James says. “We tried to keep all the other rectangle forms like the fireplace and other joinery to one side as well.”

While the living spaces are now open plan, the new skylight and glass balustrades direct light downstairs into the bedrooms.

Apart from the occasional guest, the owners only share their home with their dogs so James decided to optimise their sleeping arrangements with a new main bedroom pod on the upper level.

It is connected to the original house via a

corridor, effectively creating an internal courtyard and maximising natural light for living and sleep accommodation.

James says it has transformed the experience for the owners who now wake up to morning sun rather than a dark room.

“The third bedroom downstairs is really just an office and music room which works well because it has such good acoustic qualities,” James says.

“Now that the master bedroom is upstairs, it gets lots of light and it has doors opening to the rear and the internal courtyard.”

James opted for a polished concrete



Open and shut
Care has been taken to simplify the floorplan in the living area, with joinery moved to one side. To offset the rectangular lines and give the space a sophisticated beach feel, James chose sandstone and timber veneer. A sliding door hides the TV when guests drop by.



courtyard to make a clear break between the old and new styles.

Ensuite success

A cleverly designed ensuite at the back of the pod faces on to the leafy backyard and the neighbours beyond. However, the private space, which includes an egg-shaped bath and bi-fold windows, has been shielded from prying eyes with some strategically placed palms.

“The rear garden was completely re-worked and the palms were relocated to that spot because they create a lot of shade and enclose that bathroom space really well, as well as offering some privacy for the neighbours,” James says.

“It is on quite a steep site so there are houses on the upper levels that can look in.”

At the front of the house on the lower floor where the single car garage had been, James proposed a new double garage with an enclosed deck on top.

Positioning the new work to the rear of the block and leaving the existing footprint virtually untouched helped the approval process significantly, he says.

“The work that was being done at the front was consistent with the streetscape and most of the extra building work was to the rear,” James says.

“It was just a single garage before with a tin roof so it was not being used as an outdoor space.”

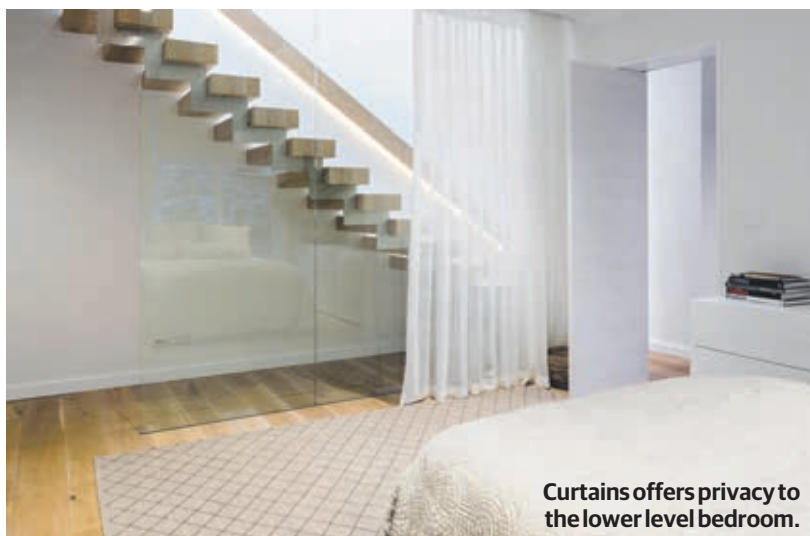
Future proof

While the new spaces have changed the way the owners live, it is the rectification work on the grand old terrace that has ensured it has a long future ahead of it.

New floors, walls, windows and ceilings have been carefully repaired or restored while existing materials such as sandstone from the site have been used in the fireplace and the garden.

“It took 12 months to complete the work but every single corner of the house was touched,” James says.

robyn.willis@news.com.au
Pictures Steve Back



Curtains offers privacy to the lower level bedroom.

