

Urban sanctuary

With respect for the environment firmly in mind, a classic inner-city terrace is turned into a private oasis



Opposite and left
A new extension was added which includes a sitting room with polished concrete flooring that leads to the revamped outdoor area that intermingles with the lovely garden



before

Words James Cleland Photography Brigid Arnott

As people are becoming increasingly aware of the impact they have on the environment and the effects their homes can have within the urban landscape, many homeowners and designers are moving towards the use of techniques and products that coincide with environmentally sustainable design principles.

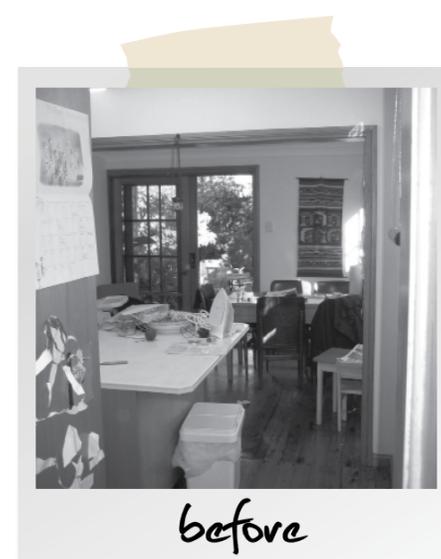
These practices are followed to allow our homes and offices to retain the levels of comfort we have come to expect from modern structures, while decreasing the costs and environmental impact incurred during the structure's lifetime.

Sydney's vibrant suburb of Newtown is the perfect playground for homeowners and designers aiming to reinvigorate classic 20th-century inner-city Australian terraces and turn them into sustainable, private inner-city oases that harness modern methods to create lasting natural comforts while also reducing a household's utility costs and carbon footprint.



Opposite
Textural interest is gained from the use of earthy materials including polished concrete and recycled jarrah strip flooring

Left
A custom bookcase and shelving unit provide storage and a place to display treasured family photos and collectibles



before

Newtown is where we find this property: a single-storey, semi-detached, two-bedroom terrace. Within it resides a modern family of four who desired a home with passive sustainable design and spacious enough to cater for their present and future demands.

Space was limited as the owners wished to retain the impressive native trees in their rear yard. To fulfil the clients' brief, the design team was challenged to create a feeling of spaciousness while working within the restrictions posed by a tight urban context.

The majority of the existing structure was kept in an effort to minimise costs and retain the spirit of the household.

To make room for an extension to the living space, the rear laundry and outside awning were demolished and a polished concrete slab was used for the lower-level flooring as a means to passively heat and cool the home. A sitting room was placed at ground level to extend the public living area. Recycled timber flooring was used to construct the staircase that connects the lower area of the extension to the second storey,

where a new bedroom and ensuite are located.

This new addition was envisioned as a contemporary pavilion attached to the existing home so the new rooms feel engaged with the outer courtyard intermingling with the garden. An intentional oriental aesthetic was created with the cladding for the exterior that mirrors the delicate look of rice paper and bamboo frames that are quintessential to traditional Japanese architecture.

The connection between the new area of the home and the rear garden cannot be ignored. Large external sliding doors separate the living area from the outer courtyard, creating a seamless opening. The transition blends the inner and outer areas in effortless harmony. A single frameless bedroom window above looks out onto the rear courtyard, which evokes the feeling of living in the canopy of the tall native trees, almost as if in a tree house.



Strategically placed windows allow for good cross-flow ventilation and an abundance of natural light



Use marine-grade plywood with hoop-pine veneer and laminate for maximum efficiency in wet areas



The multitude of operable windows north and south of the living room allow for cross-breeze ventilation, dismissing the need for airconditioning and inviting natural light into the home during daylight hours, further enhancing the connection to the natural beauty found within this inner-city landscape.

To counteract the southern-facing rear façade the design team placed a high-level north-facing window in the living room via means of a sloped ceiling with the profile hidden in the joinery of the level above. Complementary north-facing windows were placed thanks to extensions made to either side of the living area. These simple improvements created a drastic change to the amount of light and air that are brought into the living spaces.

Complementing the use of passive temperature regulation and lighting techniques, the team recycled demolished brickwork into paving for the rear garden, installed energy-efficient lighting and water solutions along with a garden-fed rainwater tank, used locally sourced timber during construction and only native plants to rehabilitate the front garden.

These practices contribute to the sustainable design mindset that was at the forefront of this renovation. The success of the build reinforces the achievement of this environmentally sustainable design plan, creating space for a family to live in that's modern and comfortable while conscious of its impact on the environment and its surroundings. **PA**



Ground floor plan

Existing floor plan

1. Hall
2. Main Bathroom
3. Bedroom
4. Bedroom
5. Living
6. Kitchen

New floor plan

7. Laundry
8. Window Seat
9. Family room
10. Dining room
11. Bedroom
12. Ensuite



First floor plan

project particulars

This project was designed by
DAVID BOYLE ARCHITECT
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 Tel 02 4360 1838
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This project was built by
STEVE HART
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 Tel 0412 283 110
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FLOORING

Kitchen: Existing timber strip flooring
Dining: Polished concrete slab on ground
Living: Polished concrete slab on ground
Bedroom: Godfrey Hirst 100 per cent pure wool Twine carpet in Sugar Cane
Stairs: Polished recycled jarrah timber strip flooring to step. Carpet to main stairs
Outdoor: Paving, salvaged brickwork

WALLS

Kitchen/dining/living/bedroom/stairs: Dulux Antique White half-strength painted plasterboard
Outdoor: Fibre-cement cladding with western red cedar battens, Colormaker Industries acrylic Weathertuff tinted Dulux Green Tea

BATHROOM FITTINGS

Cabinetry: Custom-made joinery using marine-grade plywood with hoop-pine veneer and laminate
Basin: Kado Cirque
Tiles/walls and floor: 500mm x 200mm white gloss rectified wall tiles from The Art of Tiles. 50mm x 50mm Avorio Mosaic floor tiles from The Art of Tiles
Taps: Mizu
Shower/bath: Hikari acrylic bath from The Japanese Bath Company

LIGHTING

Dining room: Compact fluorescent pendant with handmade beeswax light shade and Japanese maple leaves from Planet Furniture
Bedroom: Concealed compact fluorescent lighting

WINDOWS + EXTERNAL DOORS

Glass: Aneeta sashless sliding glazing
Breezeway: Louvres
Frames: Western red cedar frames with oil finish from Traeger Joinery, Newtown

OUTDOORS

Roof: Zinalume profiled roof sheeting and Zinalume gutters and downpipes
Paving: Paving, salvaged brickwork
Landscaping: Retention of mature trees and establishment of native garden
Watertank: Next Generation slimline tank
Blinds: Made by Blindcraft, Stanmore
Door tracks: Centor A14 sliding tracks