

FACT FILE

THE BRIEF

To rework a tired extension to create a more functional living space with better connection to the backyard

THE ARCHITECT

Allison Earl, Terroir

THE BUILDER

Steele Associates
Architecture + Construction



A Architect Allison Earl B The traditional facade C The new living area steps down from the garden for a seamless transition from the outdoors D A new bathroom and laundry is tucked behind the kitchen



Back to brilliance

An ungainly 1980s addition to the rear of a charming house has been tastefully transformed

When most people talk about renovating, they think in terms of building additional rooms. But for the owners of this Edwardian house in the leafy northern suburb of Lindfield, it was very much about making better use of the existing footprint.

"It was more alterations than additions," says architect Allison Earl from architectural firm, Terroir.

The owners bought the four-bedroom house in 2005 with Development Application approval for an upper storey.

The property had a sloping backyard with a tennis court and pool. However, it was the 1980s addition to the rear of the gracious double-brick house that was bothering them.

Boxed in

The back living area was a brick rectangle with limited connection to the backyard.

"When they moved in, the owners noticed the rear corner was really dark and the kitchen was not functioning the way they wanted to use it," Allison says.

Having seen Terroir's work in a magazine, the owners invited them in for a series of conversations about a new

approach to the living space. Allison says the fundamental shift was to consider the living space as belonging more to the outdoors than the interior.

Collaborative effort

"The design stage was quite long because the owners became aware of where the sun was coming from and [how it affected] the micro climate so the brief evolved," she says. "It was quite a lengthy design process and it was quite a collaborative one."

"We did not want the extension to block the views outside so the family can all see each other"

Rather than a rectangular space, they decided on more of a crescent-shaped design that would allow for greater access to the pool and garden across the new living space.

To create the seamless transition they were looking for between indoors and out, carefully angled eaves were positioned to control the entry of light indoors throughout the year.

A contemporary take on the traditional

veranda, the connection between indoor and outdoor has been further strengthened by continuing the pool pavers partially into the internal area.

Level best

Because of the sloping nature of the site, Allison says managing changing levels was a major part of the design.

By allowing for a change of level internally, they could flatten out the veranda space, which would allow for greater flexibility when placing furniture.

"The backyard is quite a bit higher," Allison says. "We start stepping in the house and kept going so it feels like all one level."

With two young children to consider, Allison says supervision, safety and the practicalities of daily life were the strongest drivers of the design.

"We did not want the extension to block the views outside so the family can all see each other," Allison says.

Inside, the owners were keen to pack as much into the space as possible without cluttering it up.

A galley kitchen has been angled into a corner on the boundary of the property providing a bird's-eye view of the rest of



the living space and the garden. A new bathroom and laundry have been tucked in behind the kitchen for easy access.

Spacious dining areas have been provided both indoors and out, while there is even a small living space big enough for two chairs overlooking the pool.

However, the success of the new work is largely about what is not seen.

Highly regarded joinery firm Sydney Joinery were responsible for providing maximum storage in the space.

Apart from the concealed cupboards that line the dining area, drawers have been



E



F



G

AFTER

BEFORE

E The angled addition provides a clear view of the garden room F Jarrah timber flooring has been continued in the timber veneer in the kitchen G The existing pool had a facelift to tie it in with the new work

secreted within the island benchtop while next to the kitchen there is a discreet homework nook with bench seat space for school bags and shoes.

Jarrah timber veneers were chosen to match the floorboards and then carefully selected to make the most of the natural patterning in the wood.

"Sydney Joinery did a really good job matching the veneers," Allison says.

"The owner wanted to hide the mess so we even put drawers into the [kitchen] benchtop."

Good relations

Having discussed it with them prior to lodging with council, there were no objections from neighbours. However, council insisted on providing some screening for the neighbours next to the

"It was a council requirement but everyone was so happy with [the glazing] we are now using it on other projects"

kitchen boundary and the owners were required to put in opaque glass.

As it turned out, it was far from being a hardship.

"We had to put in translucent glazing because they are so close to the neighbour," Allison says.

"It was not our intention, it was a council requirement but everyone was so happy with it that now we are using it on other projects."

Because of their position close to natural bushland, council also took a keen interest in landscaping for the side and rear of the property in the interests of maintaining green corridors for wildlife. At the same time, however, Allison says the position also required bushfire protection measures such as steel mesh for the windows.

In addition, the owners installed large bladder tanks and connected them to the roof to collect rainwater.

Smooth sailing

Although building work was delayed because of rain, Allison says the 10-month process ran relatively smoothly.

Builders Steele Associates took on the challenge of piecing together the space with its unusual roof forms.

"We had not worked with them before but the foreman was really experienced," Allison says.

"It is quite an unusual form and they were really keen to be involved and they offered ways to achieve what we wanted."

The result is a house that marries the best of old and new to provide a contemporary family home. ■

Robyn Willis

● **MORE INFORMATION**
Steele Associates Architecture + Construction 9319 0333, steeleassociates.com.au
Terroir 9279 2226, terroir.com.au

GET THE LOOK

CHAIR TODAY

The owners may not have added much space to their home but the new extension offers a lot more functionality, including room for a large dining setting. For similar chairs, try the Gilbert from Ikea. It comes in four different finishes on a chrome-plated steel frame and can be stacked when not in use.

Cleaning is as simple as a wipe down with a damp cloth. Priced at \$70 each, they are just the ticket for when guests drop by for dinner.

● **MORE INFORMATION**
Ikea ikea.com.au



MAGIC CARPET

The new living space for this home has been warmed up considerably with the addition of a beautiful Persian rug. For something similar, look no further than the range at Cadrys. Pictured is the Iran Kashgai 100 per cent wool rug 175cm by 250cm for \$2400. Hand knotted and featuring tribal symbols of plants, birds and animals, the rugs traditionally include red and earth tones with contrasts of blue and orange.

● **MORE INFORMATION**
Cadrys 9328 6144, cadrys.com.au