



CHIPPING OFF THE OLD BLOCK

The makeover of this apartment building at Bondi included the addition of six balconies on the surf side of the building and four garages excavated into rock below.

Allan Nicholls, who oversaw the project after inheriting the design of Cracknell and Lonergan Architects, says it was not without a few headaches.

In the original design, existing windows had been revamped to open to Juliet balconies, but the owners then requested larger openings with big bifold doors, Nicholls says. The change was a complication. The larger openings, compounded by the removal of internal walls in some apartments, would result in an unstable facade. So Nicholls added a strengthening column through the centre of the building.

Lawrence Flancbaum, an owner and resident, says another unexpected hitch was the re-routing of electrical and gas cables discovered

during excavation. Flancbaum was one of a sub-committee of three (appointed by the 10 owners) who managed the project.

"There were seven units getting either a balcony or garage [or both]," Flancbaum says. "It was crucial that they gave three of us permission to act on their behalf."

In the end, each balcony cost about \$70,000 and each garage about the same. The seven unit owners who benefited then contributed between \$6000 and \$16,000 to the building's sinking fund. So the other owners, who gave permission for the work but didn't participate, gained too. "The money is being used to renovate the rest of the building," Flancbaum says.

*Architects: Cracknell and Lonergan
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