

House of the week: Lowry Bay

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The private grassed area at the back is a wonderful outdoor play area protected from any on shore wind.

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ing opposite the shoreline in Lowry Bay, and overlooking the weington narbour was started, an architectural jigsaw puzzle may finally be complete.

When architect Mona Quinn was commissioned for the project, the client wanted to alter and extend in the period of the original style, the arts and crafts era of the 1920s.

With a little sleuthing, Quinn found the house had been designed by Bernard Johns, but suspected the grand scale of the plan had been abandoned during construction.

“It certainly looked as though it was meant to be of a grand scale, and had an elaborate staircase that ended in one small upper storey bedroom.”

From the front, the house looked grand with dormer windows in the upper level. But around the back, the tiny size of the second storey was much more apparent.

It came as no surprise that the client requested more room, as well as wanting super-modern wet areas, rear garaging and a separate guest wing.

It was also necessary to have craftsmen on site in order to make the scotia, architraves, skirting boards and balustrades suitable for an arts and crafts home.

The question of creating flow and views, yet still retaining the arts and crafts era architectural style was cleverly created using internal windows and panel walls that are able to be manipulated to be either open or closed.

The ultra modern kitchen consists of clean, uninterrupted lines and white gloss against stained oak with bench tops of Caesarstone in Raven Black. The rangehood is recessed into frosted glass encased by aluminium edging and tiles on the floor.

The master ensuite features Bisazza mosaic tiles, the precise dimensions of the space were sent to Bisazza and their bespoke design of pearl, silver, jet black and a range of greys create a splendid feature. The main bathroom and powder room also have Bisazza tiles in mosaic style.

The interior is mostly neutral with feature walls of Resene Prussian Blue in the dining room, and Tinpan Alley in the master bedroom. The exterior weatherboard is half grey olive and is trimmed, both inside and out, Resene alabaster.

It's a substantial build which is unpretentious in style and perfectly fitting for the environment and history of the bay.

After all, the area inspired Katherine Mansfield to write her famous short story, 'At the Bay' nearly 100 years ago.

How fitting that today the owner of one of the area's foremost properties would take the time and effort to have his project fit seamlessly into the surrounds - restored, altered and extended to face another hundred years of life in Lowry Bay.

THE DETAILS

Project cost: under \$2 million

Architect: Mona Quinn, Callidus Architects Ltd

Contractor: Maridale Construction Ltd

Build Size: Extension approx 200sq.m, house now totals 380 sq.m, plus new 70 sq.m. guest wing and 4 car garage with high stud for boat and large storage area in the roof void.

Materials: Timber & concrete floors. Concrete floor with in-floor heating, timber framing with structural steel beams & portals, timber trusses and rafters, terracotta tile and butynol roofing, timber weatherboards, timber window joinery, gib walls and ceilings, gib sound proof system to intermediate floor, solid core interior doors, gib Alto Cove to scotia detail, ceramic & Bisazza tiles in wet areas, polished concrete hearth, coloured concrete paths with Hinuera Stone border.

Energy efficiency: Fully insulated, underfloor heating plus a radiator system, double glazing.

Done right: Imported Italian Bisazza tile mosaics for the wet areas, stained oak in-built cabinetry, cool modern feel of kitchen and wet areas whilst still retaining old character charm of house, flow of house, significant focus on lighting features to add interest and character, siting of the individual buildings on the section, and the interrelationship between them and the landscaping.

Done wrong: In a project of this size, there are always a few elements that get tweaked along the way. Initially a tile hearth was planned for one of the fire surrounds, but when a different fireplace was selected, a redesign was needed and the polished concrete turned out to be even better than the original design.

Unexpected: The amount of original framing that needed to be replaced because of borer in the original house that was unable to be seen until work started. And from a client perspective, "I was surprised at the number of decisions that had to be made."

Next time: There'll be no next time, this is it.

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