



Into the light

A CLEVER COMBINATION OF OLD AND NEW HELPED TRANSFORM THIS NEGLECTED NORTH MANLY HOME

WORDS: POLLY SIMONS

"A total dog's breakfast" was how Adam Hobbs described his first impressions of the North Manly home he shares with partner Daina Jamieson and their two young boys.

Both principals with Hobbs Jamieson Architecture in Balgowlah, the couple had been searching for the perfect renovation project for 18 months. Nonetheless, the house was in such a bad state "if we'd knocked it down, no one would have been surprised," Hobbs says.

The home was built in 1924 by the previous owner's father and over the years several ill-considered extensions had been added, creating a dark hotch-potch of rooms that faced noisy Pittwater Road.

"It was such a shame; at one point they'd even bricked in a circular stained glass window," Hobbs says. When the owner showed them photos of the original home, it was almost unrecognisable. "What we saw looked nothing like the pictures."

REORGANISING THE SPACE

It would be four years of living in the dilapidated home before Hobbs and Jamieson could finally start putting their plans into practice. Subdividing the large block, building a second home



and selling it financed the project while the couple vacillated over what to do. "At one stage, we thought we'd demolish the whole thing," Hobbs says. Instead, they opted to knock down the existing extensions and keep the original footprint of the house, adding a contemporary two-storey addition at the back.

They also rearranged the layout, reorienting the living areas away from the road and opening it up to light and breezes. "It was a cold, dark, wet sort of house," Hobbs says.

With the addition of some double glazing, the original house that once contained the kitchen and separate living and dining rooms now holds the bedroom wing and a small study, while the contemporary addition adds an open-plan kitchen and living area, with the main bedroom suite and parents' retreat above.

SEPARATING OLD AND NEW

Delineating the contemporary addition from the original part of the house was key to the design, and Hobbs was keen that the interiors also reflect this change.

"We tried to mimic the character of the original house," he says. As such, the older part of the house retains the original home's period features such as the high ceilings, with the original hallway leading to the new kitchen in the contemporary part of the house.

The transition between old and new is marked by a slatted hoop-pine veneer door that matches the kitchen joinery. "When it's closed off, you wouldn't even know the new section was there, and the slats let a lovely breeze flow down the hall," he says. The renovation also significantly improved the home's environmental performance by boosting light and airflow.

FINISHING TOUCHES

With the layout of the home complete,



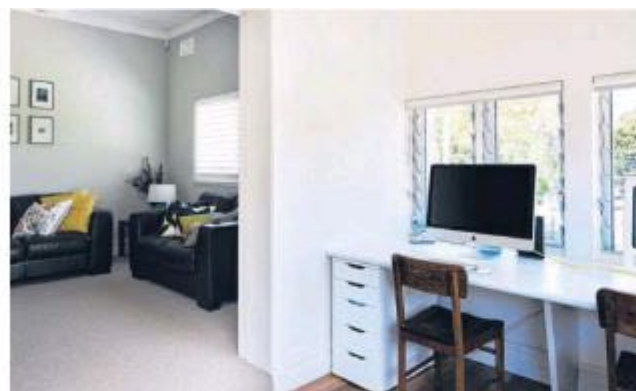
the couple could turn their attention to the interior fittings. "We like the materials to determine the palette of the houses, and then add splashes of colour," Hobbs says. Spotted gum was chosen for the floorboards because of the natural variation in the timber, while hoop pine veneer was used for the joinery in the kitchen and bathrooms and in the walk-in wardrobe off the master bedroom suite.

"We like the warmth of natural finishes," Hobbs says. Splashes of colour were added in the form of the vibrant green tiles in the bathroom and kitchen splashback, and the painted banisters of the timber staircase. "We had wanted a suspended steel staircase but it turned out to be hideously expensive," he says.

One problem with the original house was that the layout prevented Adam or Daina from keeping an eye on the two boys when they were in the backyard, while the garden itself was neglected and full of weeds.

"It was overgrown and a bit of a mess; it hadn't been looked after for 40 years," Hobbs says.

This was remedied by levelling the back yard and moving the living areas to the back of the house, separating the two by a series of bi-fold glass doors. The result is a bright and cheerful home that's perfectly tailored to the family who lives there.



the brief

To transform a dated and neglected 1920s cottage into a light and bright home suitable for a growing family

WHERE: North Manly

DESIGN: Hobbs Jamieson Architecture, 67 Wanganella St, Balgowlah

DETAILS: 9948 3807

WEB: hobbsjamieson.com.au

