

HOME

The Daily Telegraph

SATURDAY

JULY 25, 2020

build
design
living



PLUS The Parkview 27 has narrow lots covered Working from home has never looked better



DON ROBERTSON

Why everyone wants a piece of his business

Street wise

How a new house became an instant hit

NEW BUILD

Rosemary grows in the brick planter facing the street, which neighbours are invited to use.



The street where we live

You can build a thoroughly modern house and still fit into the street, writes Robyn Willis

There's not a lot at first glance that makes this house stand out from its neighbours. That's just how architect Mark Szczerbicki likes it.

When the owners of this house in Russell Lea realised that their existing cottage did not have the structural integrity to carry a first floor addition, they were looking for a way to keep the best of the old house but create something new. Mark says he wanted to design a house that would still look like it belonged in the neighbourhood.

"Often the brick cottages in this area get demolished and a massive facade goes up," Mark says. "They look completely alien compared to the cottages on either side."

With good parks and the Bay Run nearby, the owners were happy to lose much of their

backyard to allow for the two-storey, three-bedroom floorplan.

"The backyard is smaller than what we would usually do but it was about maximising the area for the alfresco area and the plunge pool as well as the balcony to the front with its views of the city," Mark says.

The design was approved as a Complying Development, which meant the upper floor had to be set back from the ground level. Mark used the boundary setback to install a long skylight in the living area to let light in. The back garden faces west, but Mark says the site had a lot going for it.

"We knew from the owners that the house had good breezes from the east so that they barely use the airconditioning," he says. "The living spaces face north to the side and the windows are double glazed to the south."

Mark says the owners were keen to install solar panels for

THE PROJECT

Owners

A couple with two children

Architect

Mark Szczerbicki Design Studio, markszczerbicki.com

The brief

To replace an old cottage with a modern family home that still felt like it belonged in the neighbourhood

The site

A suburban block in Russell Lea with a west-facing backyard

Design solution

To build a two-storey home using similar materials to the rest of the street and maintaining similar setbacks to the neighbouring houses

How long did it take

10 months



HOME TOP TIP
 Using traditional materials like brick in a contemporary way will tie it into the street.



STREET smart

electricity but underfloor hydronic heating keeps the house warm through winter. "Underfloor heating is so much more efficient because the heat rises gently. These guys walk around barefoot all year," he says.

"THE HOUSE HAS GOOD BREEZES FROM THE EAST SO THEY BARELY USE THE AIRCONDITIONING"

To tie it into the street, the house has a similar setback to its neighbours. Mark also chose similar bricks to those used in the neighbouring houses and opted for a similar brick fence.

Landscaping by Melissa Wilson at the back, the front and inside the house beds it into the site.

While the house is a 'good neighbour' in so many ways, Mark says the owner did have one unusual request. He wanted to be able to enjoy his vintage sports car, even when it was parked in the garage. The design includes a viewing window into the garage, which reveals a stacked car system, allowing parking for four cars on a two-car footprint.

Pictures: Tom Ferguson



THE SOURCE

- Builder** Ferrocon, ferrocon.com.au
- Landscape architect** Melissa Wilson, melissawilson.com.au
- Kitchen joinery** New Age Kitchens 0414 244 346
- Face brickwork** Austral Bricks 'Bowral 76' in Renovation Gertrudis Brown colour, australbricks.com.au



V1 - TELE01Z01H0