

THOUGHTFUL DESIGN



INSPIRED BY THE 'BIG APPLE' AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN, ARCHITECT ANDREW BULLIVANT RE-DESIGNED THIS 100-YEAR-OLD HOME TO TURN A RUSTIC COTTAGE INTO A MODERN FAMILY PAD.

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New York, New York – the cityscape on the wall was photographed from the top of the Rockefeller Center looking towards the Empire State Building.



CHANGE CAN SOMETIMES BE SLOW AND OFTEN GOES UNNOTICED, BUT ANYONE WHO'D BEEN WATCHING THIS LITTLE HOUSE IN SYDNEY'S LEICHHARDT DURING 2010 WOULD HAVE SEEN IT SHIFT AND GROW LIKE A DORMANT SEED COMING TO LIFE. BUILT IN THE EARLY 1900S, IT WAS BOUGHT A LITTLE OVER A HUNDRED YEARS LATER BY ARCHITECT ANDREW BULLIVANT AND HIS WIFE WHO LIVED IN THE CHARMING OLD COTTAGE AND HATCHED THEIR RENOVATION PLANS OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. AFTER 14 GRUELLING MONTHS OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS THEY WERE FINALLY ABLE TO GET TO WORK ON A PLAN THAT INVOLVED PRESERVING THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE IN HARMONY WITH THE HISTORIC NEIGHBOURHOOD, AND REVAMPING THE BACK TO CREATE A LITTLE SLICE OF NEW YORK CITY IN SYDNEY'S INNER WEST.

OLD AND NEW

Keeping the original roofline at the front and expanding the rear of the house to a two-storey split-level, every element of the design and renovation process was extremely well thought out. "The intention was for the layout to be flexible to adapt to our changing needs and growing family as well as to appeal to a wider market of future buyers if we ever decided to sell," says Andrew. "We wanted to be sensitive to the streetscape and the history of the cottage at the front while maximising the addition at the rear. For Andrew, a working architect with his own budding firm on the side,



this was a chance to play around and engage with his favourite design ideas. “To me, the key to modern living is maximising natural light and cross ventilation while providing a strong connection between the main living space and the outdoors. I was also after a house that was low maintenance, so I could spend my free time enjoying the spaces rather than maintaining them!”

PASSPORTS, PLEASE

Let’s not ignore this house’s centrepiece any longer; the impressive 7m x 6.5m city skyline on the wall was designed to wow. “It’s a photo printed on outdoor-

Since having the kitchen renovated, the couple spend much more time cooking and enjoying the space.

rated vinyl wallpaper from VFX in Leichhardt. New York is our favourite city and we wanted to bring its life and overall vibe into our home and the space where we spend most of our time,” says Andrew.



Top The kitchen is streamlined and modern, with a unique teppanyaki-style stovetop on the island bench and a rangehood hidden inside the shimmering pendant light – a perfect example of style and practicality coming together. With space limited, the couple decided against having a dedicated ‘dining room’ as such.

[COLOUR CODE]

The exterior is painted in Dulux 'Ticking' with 'Natural White' features and trims and 'Electric Energy' for the front door and first floor eco-ply cladding.

DULUX TICKING

DULUX NATURAL WHITE

DULUX ELECTRIC ENERGY

Dulux paints were also chosen for the interior, with 'White on White' for the new addition, and 'Silkwort' and 'Tristan' in the original cottage.

WHITE ON WHITE

SILKWORT

TRISTAN



A close second for most outstanding feature is a dramatic custom-made skylight at the top of a 7m high void above the couch. "The skylight brings plenty of natural light into the south-facing living area, which is exactly what I was after. It's nice to sit on the lounge and look up to the clouds floating by."

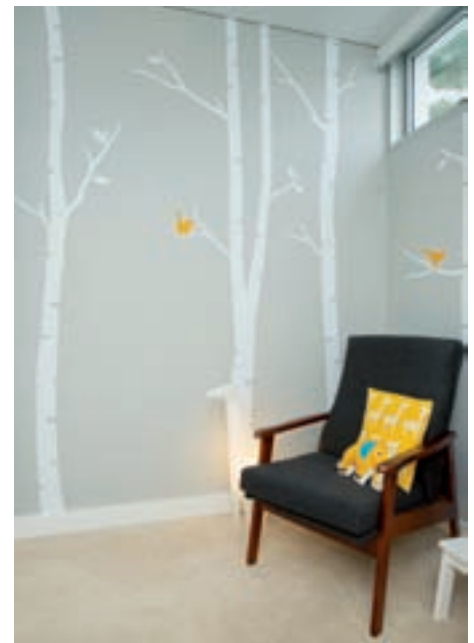
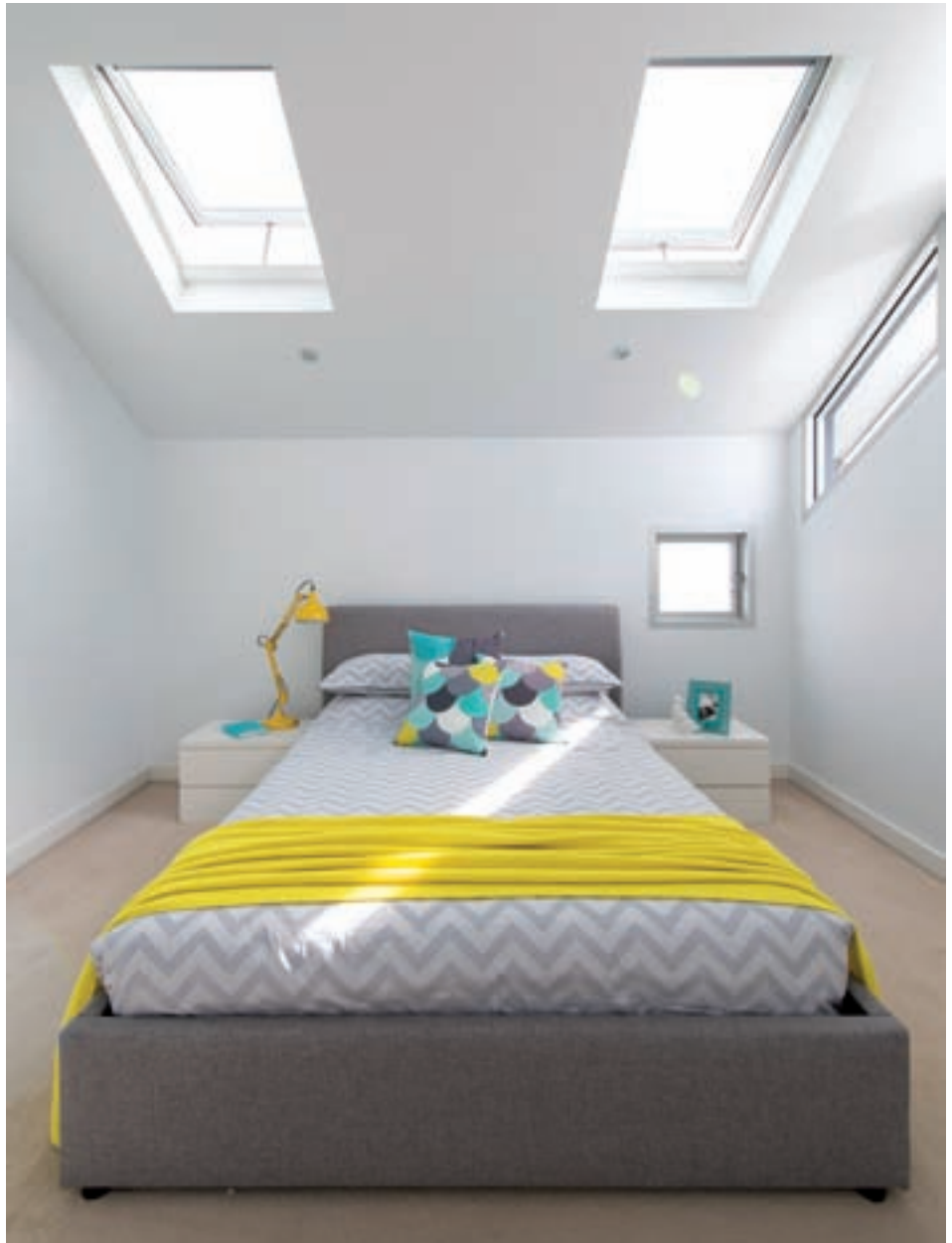
The couch is another tailored feature, from Master Sofa in Stanmore, sizing in at 4m long to suit the space perfectly. It's upholstered in Warwick 'Beachcomber Lime' fabric, which is the pop colour of this home, both inside and on the exteriors. "It started with just the front door and then we decided to link the old and the new by painting the first floor timber eco-ply cladding at the rear the same bold colour. We get so many compliments on the colour scheme from strangers walking past, which is always great."

Above A slightly formal sitting room at the front of the house reflects its history.

Opposite page:

Top Skylights directly over the bed let in plenty of light and provide a view to the stars at night. The raked ceilings and the north-facing cathedral-style windows, which beautifully frame the huge Moreton Bay fig tree across the road, let in plenty of natural light and provide strong features in the room.

Bottom The Bullivants fell in love with the combination of grey and yellow when decorating the nursery so decided to continue this theme into their own bedroom. The wall decals were bought online from a company called Wall Sticker Deal. "It was a memorable day debating where we would put each bird and leaf!" says Andrew.





[BEHIND THE SCENES]

[Luckiest find]

Realising we could import the rangehood from Italy was a defining moment in styling the downstairs space, and a lucky find!

[Favourite room]

The living space is my favourite room, it reflects my design aesthetic in being beautiful but functional and when I look around it's all so personal. The lime lounge, the New York wall, the ornaments from our travels – this room really feels like us; like home. Biggest challenge: Getting the house approved at Council; the planning system in NSW can be ridiculous at times! It's been an emotional journey but well worth it in the long run. I love being at home because... It's such a relaxing place to be. We used to love eating out before we renovated. As soon as we moved back in, we found ourselves ordering takeaway and enjoying a bottle of wine together at home more and more. We find it hard to leave at times, which is what a real home should be.



STYLE AND FUNCTION

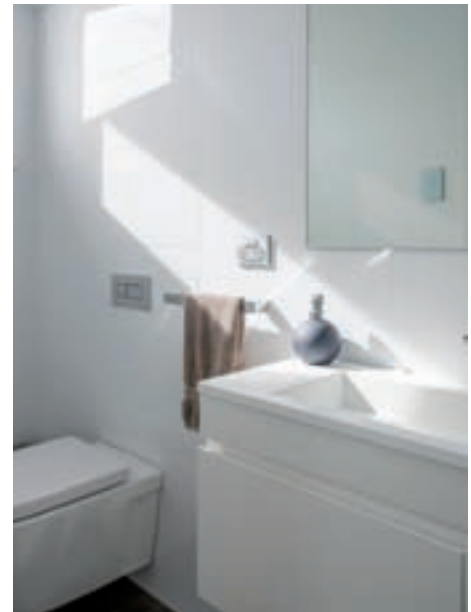
Ultra-modern polished-concrete floors flow seamlessly through the living space into the kitchen area. Andrew designed the general layout of the kitchen, which was then detailed and installed by Shane Dodd of KAD Designs. "The original kitchen was at least 40 years old and had no bench space at all," says Andrew. "There was also a leak in the ceiling above the stove which made dinnertime interesting when it was raining. If my wife was cooking I would literally have to hold a bucket between the roof and the frypan!" But, hilarious only in hindsight, those days are gone. Now the kitchen is a foodie's dream, with Caesarstone Snow benchtops, Smeg appliances, soft-close drawers and an intuitive design that ensures zero clutter.

The unique setup of this kitchen sees the stovetop drawn out of its customary location in a corner and positioned in the island bench instead, so the chef can interact easily with people in the living area. "It is different but it was done for a number of reasons," explains Andrew. "Having a window behind the sink with a bit of an outlook

Above The floor-to-ceiling louvres look out over the rooftops of the district with views towards the airport. Andrew gives high praise to the company that supplied the blinds and plantation shutters – Super Blinds and Screens in Wetherill Park. The Eames chairs here are replicas from Life Interiors in Pyrmont.



Above The bathroom accessories are from the 'Motif' range produced by Caroma Dorf.



was one, plus I like the idea of a Japanese teppanyaki style where you can talk across the bench while food is being prepared. It actually works really well for us and is how we end most days."

Can you spot the rangehood? Neither can most of the Bullivants' guests, but when Andrew points it out there are usually appreciative gasps of delight. "The rangehood is very discreet – it is the feature light and often referred to as the 'disco ball'. Most people have no idea it has another function, which reflects my general design philosophy of style and practicality." The 'Elica Star' rangehood was imported directly from Italy for the Bullivants' renovation four years ago, however they are now more readily available in Australia.

Above The mosaic tiles are white opaque glass, but they have a slight aqua green appearance that looks really fresh. The bath was the first official renovation purchase, a Hoesch Sir Norman Foster designed tub found on sale six months before construction began.

"I love residential design," says Andrew, "tight inner-city sites in particular present a lot of challenges but can be very rewarding."

CLOCK ON, CLOCK OFF

Upstairs in the new section at the rear of the house is Andrew's sun-flooded home office, and it's here he hopes to work on more small residential projects in the future. The floor-to-ceiling operable Breezeway Altair glazed louvres, installed by Ferrocon, provide views on demand. "It's such a unique view of the inner west and all the rooftops and built form in the area. Great design inspiration when looking up from the computer." Always counterbalancing the house's modernity with personal touches, the two armchairs in this room are sentimental pieces. "They belonged to my Nanna and Pa, who used to sit in them every afternoon and share a beer together," Andrew says. "We had them restored and re-covered, and I love seeing them side by side next to the window."



[ANDREW'S ADVICE]

Set a realistic budget and don't be afraid to splurge on key big-ticket items that you love and which will make the space unique.



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