



NATURAL SELECTION

This architect designed home in Tinbeerwah on the Sunshine Coast may be small in terms of footprint, but it sure is big on innovation.

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AS IT STANDS

Forward-thinking design allowed this house to be built with minimal disruption to the original site.



Designed as a family house that connects to the ground and opens to the bush, ocean, stars, and sky, this home in the Noosa hinterland works as an operable glass pavilion. Wrapped in sliding hardwood screens that allow the inhabitants to control the light, breezes, and privacy – as well as letting in the bushland views – it’s a retreat that embraces its natural environment without impeding on it, completely defying the norm.

While the site itself is a large 8745 m², set on a steep Noosa hinterland plot with views out to the ocean, the home treads lightly at only 260 m². Teeland Architects are behind the impressive design.

The accessible part of the site had already been cleared of vegetation by the previous owners, but they had dramatically cut and filled without the retaining and drainage necessary to ensure strong

foundations of any future new build. This major problem presented the architect with an idea: use the design of the new house and the surrounding landscape to stabilise and rehabilitate the land.

“We designed the new house to work with the existing cuts that had been made previously, utilising new retaining walls, drainage systems and the landscape to shore up and repair the ground,” architect David Teeland says.

With young children, the owners were eager to be able to step from the house directly into the garden. “With steep sites, it is easy for the house to end up high above the natural ground and lose a connection to the earth. Working with the existing levels, we were able to configure the floor plan so that the kitchen, living, dining and children’s bedrooms opened directly onto garden spaces to encourage the kids to go outside and provide an alternative to screen-based entertainment.” →

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**CLEVER
THING**

Sliding screens in the kitchen are designed to keep the summer heat out and trap the winter sun.

COOL IT

Thanks to passive cooling, a ceiling fan is all that's needed in the bedroom.



The other challenge, with ocean views to the east, was how to protect the building from the hot morning summer sun while maintaining the outlook from the house. “In its simplest form, the house is designed as an operable glass pavilion, wrapped in fine hardwood screens so the owners can control the amount of direct sun coming in,” David explains of the savvy design. “In winter, they can slide open the screens to let the winter sun in to heat up the concrete floor and on summer mornings they can have the screens closed to provide shade from the direct sun, while still maintaining views and breezes through the timber battens.”

The long, thin floorplan makes the most of the ocean views and amplifies cross ventilation and natural light. It also allows for the family to come together to cook, eat and relax while at the same time creating separate, and more quiet, intimate spaces.

While the kitchen, living, and dining zone open onto the north-east

garden and pool, the bedrooms are pushed to the more private southern end of the site, separated by bathrooms and robes.

“This kind of narrow, rectangular plan is a design strategy that we have utilised on a number of our projects,” David says. “On a steep site like this, running a long thin building along the contours allows us to minimise the amount of cut and fill. Secondly, it ensures the building is only one room deep to maximise cross ventilation and natural light for the interior spaces.”

A home that embraces its surrounding environment naturally called for sustainability to be a significant part of the plan. It’s designed to collect solar power and rainwater, while wastewater from bathrooms and the kitchen and laundry is treated on site and used for irrigation and bush regeneration. A small orchard and terraced vegetable garden complete the idyll for this young family who get to grow into, and in love with, their contemporary sustainable house in the hinterland. →



ON TREND

Laid from floor to ceiling, large-format tiles in a matt finish give the bathroom a modern edge.



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