

A Critique of the Winning Design

The existing dwelling, in a pleasant street with good solid neighbouring buildings, has no presence although possessed by a homey humility. The building is functionally obsolescent on a great site with unused potential.

The competitor brief was broad – be contemporary, create a presence, comply with regulations, control climate, contribute to the environment and capitalise on the site – all within a budget, to provide 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 living areas, lots of storage and outdoor spaces and house more than one vehicle.



The response of the winning design was clear with little apparent compromise to the existing house.

The architects design statement underlined his design process as one of opportunities, of looking for vistas, statements and effects in the arrangement of the functions and spaces. The result is a house of high interest, some fun, easy liveability and climatic comfort.

There are internal vistas, which make for constantly changing experiences, even discoveries and external views, which enable direct connection with the broader horizon of the Bay and a close connection with sun, breeze and gardens.

It will be a light house, a result of the dislocation of two pavilions – the front one on the foundations of the existing house and a rear pavilion joined by a link between levels vertically, and the functions horizontally.

The two pavilions have different characters – the street side responds to the masonry of the streetscape and the garden side is lightweight and open responding to the northern sun, views and landscape.

The house will respond well to the four seasons; with limited need for air conditioning in summer with a range of living options and the compartmented pavilions allow for efficient heating in winter. Spring and Autumn will be welcomed on the sunny terraces. Water reuse is well controlled, material and finishes respect low embodied energy and in use energy requirements are governed only by choice not need, given solar heating opportunities, sun penetration control and cross ventilation.

The house embraces the garden, with a range of quiet and active places to be and a well placed pool for both play and visual effect.

The design does more than renovate the existing, it adds to the street, to its neighbours and capitalises on a great site.

The resultant architecture is consistent with the aim to produce a new presence in the street. The roof forms are well integrated into a single plane joining the Pavilions and producing newness to the whole. The stepped wall planes relieve the side fence feeling and contribute to both neighbours.

The house fits well to its context, adds value to the street and is a built contribution, as well as being a house designed to be really lived in.

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