

FACT FILE

THE FAMILY

Peter and Maya Orczykowski and their daughter Marta, 21

THE BRIEF

To design a 21st-century home using traditional Australian building materials

THE DESIGNER

Peter Downes

Design that melts

Making optimum use of a secluded Avalon site with expansive views had its

Often the most attractive aspects of a site are the ones that make it so difficult to build on. After living in their 1970s home overlooking Pittwater for a number of years, Peter and Maya Orczykowski realised it would not do.

"We always wanted to live here, but the house was old and didn't suit our needs anymore," Peter says.

At the end of a private right of way in Avalon, on Sydney's Northern Beaches, the house was in a secluded location with little impact on its neighbours.

"It is an unusual location, which is why we wanted to stay," Peter says.

The couple was reluctant to tear the house down and so consulted local building designer Peter Downes.

Renovate or detonate

Downes pulled renovation plans together and was in the process of calling in tenders when it became apparent that another approach might be better.

"When we got some of the prices back, we realised it would not be any more expensive to build a new house," the building designer says.

Despite being a long way down the track with the renovation process, Downes was happy to go back to the drawing board and design a new residence.

"They had a really big block of land and it had water views. Peter and Maya wanted a house that would meet modern market expectations, but the [existing] garage height was too low for a 4WD and it was poorly located on the block," Downes says.

Almost as wide as it was long, the site presented some attractive design opportunities.

Divide and conquer

Downes divided the house into four zones and drew up plans that would provide views from almost every room.

With two levels for living and sleeping and a third for a basement garage, plans for the three-bedroom home were submitted to council and passed, without incident, within a few months.

"With a lot of these projects, we have problems with potential view losses [from neighbours] but the block is nice and wide and there are plenty of trees around so there was no overshadowing," Downes says.



A Owners Peter and Maya Orczykowski **B** Construction materials include timber and corrugated steel **C** Almost all rooms have attractive views **D** The three-storey house has curved roofs, which have added an element of difference to the alfresco area **E** Modern look bathroom fixtures **F** Multiple windows provide various views **G** A generously sized kitchen makes entertaining easy



Photos: John Fotiadis