

Home Renovations

Home Addition Case Study - West Pymble

Clever Design Avoided Council Delays

Professional couple Elizabeth and David P..... had very clear ideas what they wanted when they went in search of a builder to extend their West Pymble home of 10 years, professionalism.

They saw the builder's professionalism as the key to two of their very specific requirements - a design that faithfully integrated completely with their 1940's home, and a design that was not going to get bogged down in the Council's Development Application process.

David, a Senior Business Banking Manager, and Elizabeth, a Regulatory Affairs Manager for a US Pharmaceutical company, had spent a lot of time weighing their options to move or extend to accommodate their daughter's need for more room and study space in high school.

Eventually, an extensive property search brought them to the decision that, as any purchase would still necessitate renovations, they could achieve the space they needed by extending their existing home, thus allowing them to stay in a suburb they liked.

Being an older style, three bedroom house, it had small rooms with 3m ceilings. However the large steeped roof that already accommodated a standing-headroom, dust-proof storage area lent itself to an extension.

"We didn't need to speak with many builders," Elizabeth said.

"Cape Cod had been recommended to us by a neighbour and they were totally professional from the outset. We just knew they were going to do exactly what we wanted."

Cape Cod Australia's designer grasped their need not only for a sympathetic, blended design, but one that would possibly qualify as a complying development or pass through council quickly.

Not only did they want to avoid a repetition of a previous building project that had seen plans tied up for almost 18 months in council, but they wanted the job to start quickly so they could benefit from a small window of opportunity for alternative accommodation.

They got their wish. The Cape Cod proposal for a first floor addition to accommodate two bedrooms with 3m ceilings was approved in approximately six weeks as a complying development.

Elizabeth said the design fitted their brief that the addition had to look like it had been part of the house and integrated.

"It just all blends," she said.

"Even the windows at the front have been designed to replicate the original windows below.



"The finish of the house on the exterior is almost an exact match with the existing house."

Elizabeth said that Cape Cod's attention to detail was excellent. For example, in order that the stairs would not impose too much on first floor space, they utilised a return design and Cape Cod insisted that the stair manufacturers measure on site to ensure a perfect fit without covering the existing window.

Unlike their previous build where the builder would not consider unexpected changes, Cape Cod's Project Manager, Greg, was happy to help.

An example was the original corning, or lack thereof, where the stairs were cut into the ceiling. Although the old cornice had been eliminated in this section on the original plans, as soon as David and Elizabeth saw the effect they asked whether it was possible to have the corning returned.

"Greg got the carpenter to discuss with us how we could create framing specifically to accommodate the cornice. Then Greg salvaged the cornice pieces that had been removed so they could be restored back to their original position."

"If there was an issue Greg's answer was 'That's fine, we'll fix it' and that was the answer with everything he did, even to relocating the manhole for us."

"The job ran to schedule, even regardless of the rain. In fact, it poured the day the roof came off but they still worked on under



a massive multi-coloured tarpaulin that resembled a circus tent."

The pair have received nothing but compliments from family and neighbours since the project was completed last December.

One neighbour in the street, whom they had not previously met, even stopped to say how good it looked and asked for the builder's contact details.