

Home Renovations

Home Addition Case Study - Bellevue Hill

As Chief Executive Officer, Investment, for a property group Andrew B--- had no end of building industry experience and contacts on which he could draw when it came time to renovate his 1970's A-frame home at Bellevue Hill.

But Andrew was drawn to the style and reputation of Cape Cod Australia.

"I spoke with two other builders plus a high profile architect who gets a lot of accolades but I felt straight away there was potentially going to be conflict as builders tried to deal with inflexible architects," Andrew recalled.

"I'd seen a lot of Cape Cod's work around the Eastern suburbs. I thought their style would suit what I had in my mind for this house – sort of a beachy, Hamptons feel."

Andrew said that a real cruncher for him and his wife Pip was that they were pretty fixed as to what they wanted and Cape Cod's designers were very accommodating and "got it straight away."

"Plus they were a one-stop shop. We were dealing with a designer, project manager and builder who all worked for the one company so there were no egos and they all worked well together."

Also, as Andrew was in the building industry, he wanted to be hands-on and also to use his own supplier relationships for fixtures, fittings, finishes and other items. Again, Cape Cod was more than accommodating.

"Cape Cod were happy for us to purchase our lights, showers, carpet, baths and the whole kitchen. They adjusted out prices for those items from their base building contract but still prepared and installed where appropriate within the scope. It was fantastic and essentially allowed us to up-spec to a higher quality if we desired."

Despite the B---'s four years of planning and preparation, Cape Cod's designers were still able to introduce efficiency and detail, suggesting, for example, an alternative balcony to better maximise city and harbour views and encroach less on yard space.

Andrew admits that he gave Cape Cod a challenging brief – turn a pocket-sized home into one of grandeur, creating extra room but keeping a similar ground floor footprint of the two-storey A-frame and not adding a third storey or taking away level yard space

The original '70s house comprised three bedrooms (two large and one small) plus a study. One of the bedrooms was downstairs as was the study. Andrew wanted four good sized bedrooms, all upstairs, one of them with an ensuite and a main bathroom.

1970's A-Frame Transformed



POCKET SIZED TO GRANDIOSE

Downstairs he wanted the rabbit warren of rooms opened out to create a spacious, light filled environment containing a separate generous size rumpus room, dining room, living room opening up to the outdoors with a covered verandah area, study, plus bathroom and laundry area.

Upstairs the solution was to push the roof line out while downstairs everything was gutted, keeping only a few original external walls.

There's now significantly more room on the upper level to accommodate our three young children Lachlan, Archie and Tommy. The master bedroom has an ensuite, walk-in robes and a private Juliet balcony. The other three bedrooms have walk-in robes. There's a bathroom and a huge shared balcony.

"Downstairs we opened up a whole new section on one side. Full height sliding glass doors open the dining and lounge areas north to the pool and garden. In addition, we rebuilt the single car garage to a double connected internally to the house.

"It was a big build, new roof, garage, floors, windows, ceiling, and walls. It wasn't far off a whole new build.

The construction took around 11 months during a period of record rainfall. Andrew

said he was more than content with the time as some of delays were caused by additional work he wanted done concurrently such as landscaping, external verandahs and rejuvenation of the pool.

"We were under 5% in cost variations and that's an excellent result. I was pretty impressed," he said.

More impressive from Andrew's point of view, that of someone who works in the industry, was the quality of workmanship and eye for detail.

"In terms of detail Cape Cod is impressive. For example, with waterproofing they do over and above what most people do.

"We only had one leak in the first week that we moved in and they fixed it within a few hours. There were only very minor things and I'd normally expect far more. They're unbelievable in their response to defects and rectifications."

The B---'s home was a finalist in the NSW building awards last year, but for Andrew and Pip it's a winner every time they get visitors, many of whom are involved in property.

"Everyone who comes here is blown away and can't believe the transformation from the original '70s home to now one of quality and style," he said.