



On the east coast of New Zealand's North Island, Bailey Architects has designed a sleek dwelling in response to



GONE FISHING

the clients' desire to upgrade an existing early 1990s house that failed to properly address its coastal amenity.



PREVIOUS PAGES, LEFT: At the heart of the reworked house is the double-height living space. The mezzanine bedroom looks out over this airy volume and enjoys coastal views. **RIGHT:** The interior connects to the terraces and lawn via sliding doors. **THESE PAGES, LEFT:** The versatile courtyard features louvred panels and an adjustable roof above the dining setting. **RIGHT:** The new living wing has been conceived as a concrete and glass insertion.

IN NEW ZEALAND the endless summers and abundant fishing of bygone years saw many old holiday houses remain largely unchanged – weathering with time and staying intact apart from acquiring the odd lean-to addition to accommodate new generations of children.

But in these days of high coastal property prices and increased design awareness – coupled with a growing culture of taking short breaks away from city life – many people are seeking to substantially improve the whole holiday home experience, even as far as upgrading dwellings that were built just a decade ago.

This house at Lang Cove, located a pleasant two-hour drive north of Auckland on the east coast of the North Island, is a case in point. After living in the existing early 1990s house for a while, the owners grew tired of its outmoded curved roof and (more importantly) the way the building failed to relate to what was right on its doorstep – the animated comings and goings of life in this popular fishing haven and the inspiring beauty of the beach and briny beyond.

The clients commissioned Auckland architect Jason Bailey, of Bailey Architects, to design the renovation, briefing him to create a crisply detailed, square, open structure with generous glazing. The new design had to work well for the couple when holidaying on their own, and also had to adapt to suit a busier household of friends and adult children. At the clients' behest, Jason even spent a weekend in the existing house

so he could experience its shortcomings at first hand. "The flaws were apparent straight away," he recalls. "The visual connection to the beach was inhibited by busy joinery. The importance of opening up to the view was obvious."

The subsequent renovation was extensive. At 795 square metres the property is reasonably generous, but the existing footprint failed to take advantage of the way the site faces out to a shared lawn reserve that spills directly onto the beach. Jason sought to reconfigure the living areas so that all the key rooms in the house had an immediate connection to this verdant stretch of grass that flows so seductively down to the glittering sands of the beach itself. It also made sense for the reworked building to gain some height to enhance views of the sky and the headland at the southern end of the beach as well as bring the islands to the east and the beach to the north into focus. With this ambitious program, it's hardly surprising that the weatherboards, joinery and garage to the rear of the house are just about all that's left of the older building.

Jason's approach was to insert a concrete-and-glass box into the body of the house to create a double-height living room from which the clients could observe clouds, birds and weather and feel more connected to the exterior. The concrete was initially intended to be precast, but because of access problems it was poured on site. This

solid material acts as an anchoring element to the building's existing and new painted weatherboard cladding while, at the front, concrete fins extend approximately one metre out from the green-tinted glazing to provide a degree of privacy from neighbours.

Although energy efficiency was not an intrinsic part of the brief, the concrete walls and concrete slab floor (under porcelain tiles) have worked very well as a thermal masses for passive solar heating. The clients rarely need to use the under-floor heating and gas fireplace because the concrete redistributes enough warmth during the night.

A mezzanine level set back from the airy double-height living area houses the main bedroom. Here, the owners forsook complete privacy for the pleasure of accessing the views from their boudoir. A balustrade made from operable aluminium louvres allows some visual separation but, when opened, renders the bedroom a floating platform that looks straight out to sea. There is also space in this lofty retreat for a quiet sitting area for daytime contemplation of the views, while an east-facing balcony welcomes the morning sun.

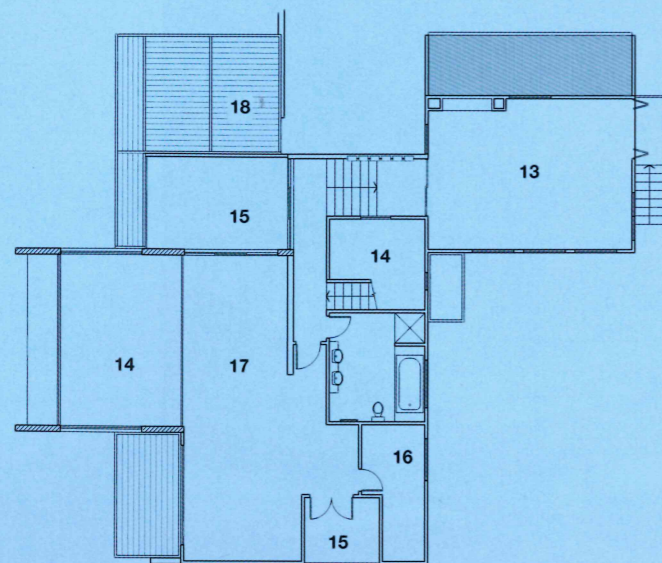
Addressing the brief, Jason also sought to create better opportunities for outdoor living in connection with the main indoor living zone. "It became apparent, very quickly, that the eastern side was the most appealing place to site a courtyard as it's very sheltered and gets the early morning sun. The clients were already aware of that and briefed

me accordingly, but it was great to experience this for myself when I stayed in the old house that weekend," he says.

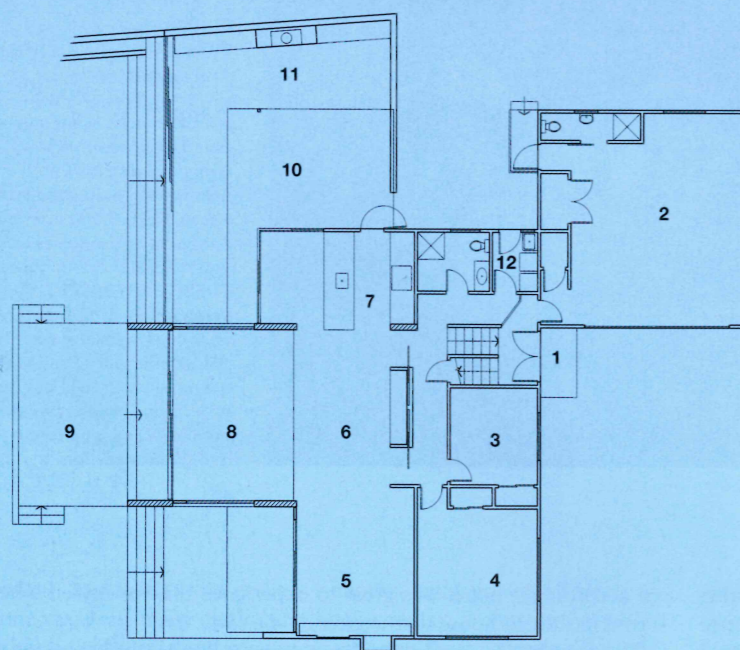
The completed courtyard has been conceived as an outdoor room that can be adapted to suit all weather conditions. It features an outdoor fireplace and a fully retractable sliding wall with panels comprising a bank of adjustable aluminium louvres. There's even a mechanically adjustable louvred roof over the alfresco dining area. "This provides a good variety of responses to sun and wind and adapts the view and degree of privacy as needed," observes Jason. Behind the courtyard is an outdoor utility space, which can also be accessed from the garage.

The garage was kept as it was, as was the downstairs bathroom, but the rest of the now 314-square-metre house has been dramatically improved. An upstairs bathroom has been rebuilt and enlarged. New access to the guest wing has been introduced where previously there was access only via the garage. All other existing rooms have been redecorated to bring them into line with the neutral tones in the new sections of the house. Sleek timber flooring has updated the circulation spaces and dark shag pile carpet has added depth to the main bedroom.

Once all the work had been completed, the clients invited Jason to spend another weekend up at the house. "It was tremendous to go back afterwards and experience the difference, to feel that it just all worked and had been worth the effort," he says. **PENNY LEWIS**



Upper level



Ground level

- 1 Entry
- 2 Garage
- 3 Office
- 4 Bedroom
- 5 Lounge
- 6 Dining
- 7 Kitchen
- 8 Sitting
- 9 Service court
- 10 Courtyard
- 11 Fireplace
- 12 Laundry
- 13 Guest room
- 14 Void
- 15 Balcony
- 16 Robe
- 17 Main bedroom
- 18 Operable roof louvres

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PRACTICE PROFILE
 Eight-person practice undertaking predominantly residential commissions, including renovations and new houses (particularly beach houses). The firm has also done some commercial work and undertakes social housing design work for Housing New Zealand.

PROJECT TEAM
 Jason Bailey (design architect and project architect),
 Phil Taylor (graduate), Nick Rowe (architectural technician)

BUILDER
 Wooding Construction

CONSULTANTS
Engineer Markplan Consulting
Landscaping owners and Bailey Architects
Interiors, lighting owners and Bailey Architects; ECC Lighting; Lighting Direct

PRODUCTS
Roofing Longrun colour steel
External walls Pine weatherboard, painted; in situ concrete
Internal walls Plasterboard, painted
Windows and doors Nuralight aluminium frames
Flooring Tasmanian oak; Source Mondial 'Chinchilla Granite' carpet
Lighting ECC Lighting
Kitchen Miele appliances; GEC fridge; Danske joinery; concrete benchtop by Stevensons; LG Carder tapware
Bathroom Joinery by Danske; concrete benchtop by Stevensons
Climate control Louvretech
External elements Jacobsen tiles
Other Rattan lounge suite by Rooms
 Marimekko; Cushions by Piece

TIME SCHEDULE
 Design, documentation 6 months
 Construction 10 months

SITE SIZE
 795 m²

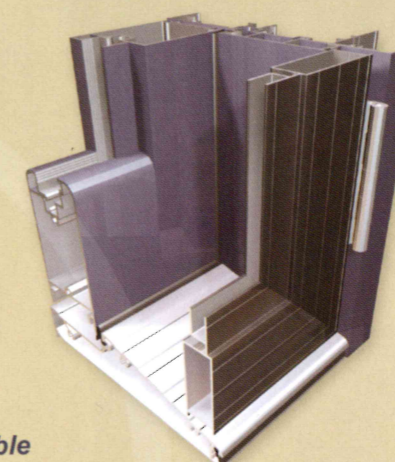
PHOTOGRAPHY
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