

Cover Story: Fitzroy Townhouses

Peter Searle Design won the *Multi-Residential – Dual Occupancy* award in the BDAV's 2011 Building Design Awards for two townhouses in Fitzroy. The site, surrounded by a variety of historically significant early Victorian buildings, provides substantial contextual challenges for a modern infill development.

"Initially in the design concept stage, the challenges to fulfil the clients brief on the extremely difficult small irregular site of 271 square metres seemed insurmountable," said Peter Searle.

"The project brief was to design two dwellings, each to have a minimum of 20 square metres, and each to also include two-car garaging per townhouse."

"The clients also wanted some form of water feature, possibly even a pool!"

"They also desired a rustic WOW factor façade."

"The site challenge, therefore, made an increase in height the only viable option," said Peter.

"Numerous other challenges arose, including overcoming immediate neighbour overshadowing and overlooking, which was a paramount priority."

"The project was achieved with the use of building heights and various materials to highlight the architectural form and rustic façade," said Peter.

"Two spacious residential townhouses are the result. Townhouse one has three bedrooms with an elevated north-facing solar lap pool on the mid-level. Townhouse two has four bedrooms. Both have abundant daylight, ventilation, and double glazed, sound proofed internal walls. Innovative materials and textures ensure that both homes meet a six-star rating."

"Although contemporary, both satisfy strict heritage controls. Inclusion of bi-fold and stackable sliding doors facilitate

living and dining zones which are brought outside, creating an expansive outdoor alfresco area."

"Striking interiors maximise habitation. The modern design offers both privacy and individuality. The clients' needs have been well interpreted. The project came in under budget, and each townhouse has a very distinct and identifiable personality," added Peter.

The Judges said the winning dual-occupancy maximised the opportunity presented by the site, yet ensured that the new dwellings are respectful of the surrounding structures and sensitive interfaces. The clever layout has solved the need for four cars to be parked on site, protected abutting sensitive secluded private open space areas (at ground and first floors), intelligently included buffers to neighbouring noise sources and provided occupants with a high level of internal and external amenity.

"The 'timber box' façade, extruded window frames and pop-up clerestory roof windows provide a striking yet well placed form within this old Melbourne context. The careful selection of rustic materials reflects the colours and tones of surrounding bluestone right-of-way, red brick and timber present throughout the streetscape," said the Judges.

"Overall, the result is a beautifully presented and designed modern dual-occupancy that sits well within its historically significant surrounds."



Acknowledgements

- Designer** Peter Searle Design
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- Web..... www.petersearledesign.com.au
- Builder** MC Building & Construction P/L
- Photographer**..... Loren Mitchell
- Building Surveyor** All Australian Building Permits
- Engineering**..... Nettle Engineering Consultant
- Energy Rating** G & P Fast Online HER
- Geotechnical Report** HardRock Geotechnical
- Planning Report**..... Clause:1 Planning
- Interior Design** Austin Design Associates
- Landscape Design** Garden Productions

Major Suppliers included

- Wall Cladding:** Bluestone, Render, Colorbond steel seamless cladding
- Roofing:** BlueScope Steel Colorbond Spandek Woodland Grey
- Roof Cap:** BlueScope Steel Colorbond 0.75 folded cap flashing
- Window Supplier:** AWS Windows by Jag Windows
- Outdoor Paving:** DD's Landscaping (20mm Bluestone)
- Internal Flooring:** Vogue Ivory Board, Azure Euro Oak Board and Plush Pile Carpet
- Insulation:** Earthwool by Justrite
- Plasterboard:** Boral Plasterboard
- Bench tops:** Stainless steel and Calcutta honed Marble
- CabinetMaker:** Bass Cabinets
- Cabinets:** 2 pack paint, satin finish and Timber Veneer
- Balustrade:** External Stainless steel wire, rectangle and uprights, Internal – Solid Timber Strips black Japanese rubbed back

