



urban delight

After a colourful life as a factory and pub, this inner-west residence is now a hidden retreat from the hectic working week

WORDS Danielle Townsend PHOTOGRAPHY Brett Boardman

It may be hard to believe now, but before a dramatic renovation, this house in Sydney's inner west had a confused identity and a dark interior thanks to its past incarnations as both a factory and a pub.

The site was also heavily constrained by tall defining walls on three sides, which hemmed the little terrace in. "We also discovered the house was supposedly sitting on contaminated soils, so we needed to negotiate that, too," says principal architect Shaun Carter of Sydney-based architects, carterwilliamson.

The main request from the clients was that the renovation bring light into the space. The original house was so dark and segmented that they were desperate for the opportunity to open it up and add some much-needed light.

"Bringing light into the interior of the house was identified early on as a high priority by the clients," says Shaun.

Additionally, the client is a big soccer fan, so a TV room was a priority for him to relax in comfort and watch his games. A beautiful kitchen was also needed for the family's



The central courtyard feeds light into the rest of the home



Bisazza zebra-patterned mosaics are a dramatic option for the splashback.

The kitchen has dual-purpose worktops which become a casual dining space when it's just the family at home

The house wraps itself around the courtyard core, the permeable walls providing wonderful 'happenstance' glimpses into the courtyard.

wonderful cooking, as well as a decent study.

"Our inspiration was to create an urban delight, a hidden oasis for the clients in the heart of the bustling inner west, a place of rest and seclusion to retreat to at the end of the working week," says Shaun.

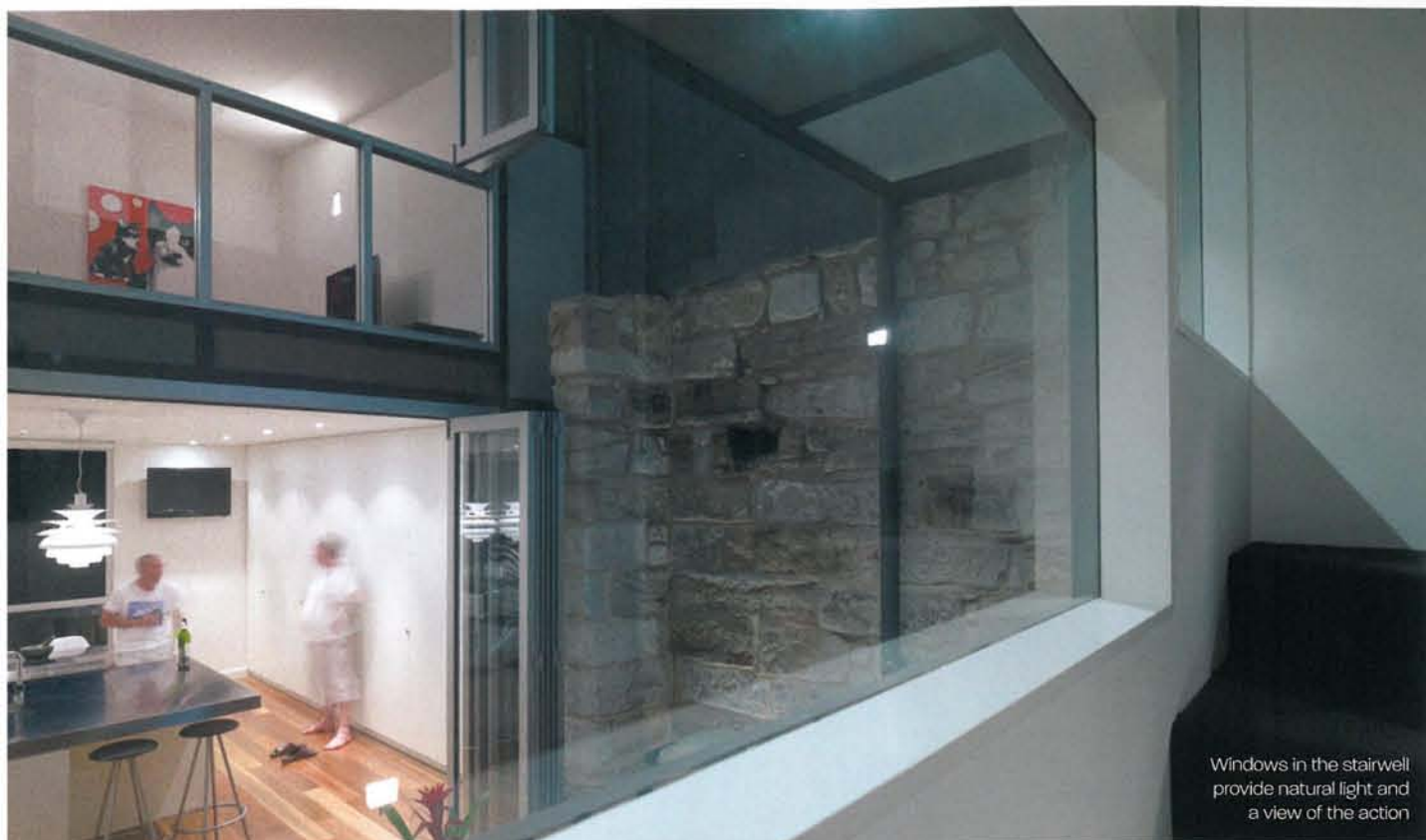
Light was added to the home in two ways. First, the single-room depth of the interior spaces facilitates dispersion of natural light through the interior spaces.

"Second, to capture and optimise natural light, the house was structured around a central courtyard — now the heart and soul of the terrace — sunk deep into the centre of the home. The courtyard provides a vital connection between indoor and outdoor spaces and draws light right into the interior of the house. The house then wraps itself around the courtyard core, the permeable walls providing wonderful 'happenstance' glimpses into the courtyard below as you spiral upwards towards the top level," says Shaun.

The central courtyard and rear wall were clad in lightweight FC cladding, framed by natural anodised aluminium batons. The Mondrianesque pattern they created became a design feature, enhanced by a painting scheme inspired by Victorian/Federation tessellated tiling, which explores unexpected colour combinations.

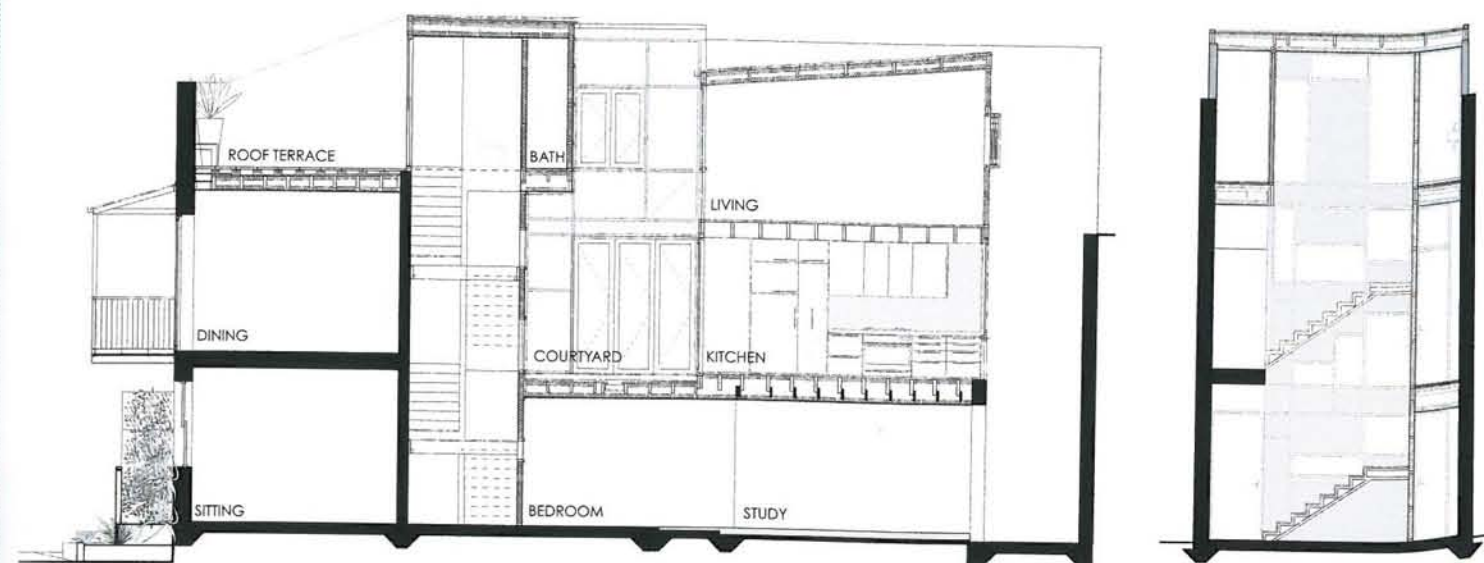
On the ground floor, plaster was pulled off the existing party walls, revealing beautiful convict-hewn sandstone blocks that were re-pointed to create a textural wall in the entry hall, sitting room and bedroom. New timber floors were laid and the level was reworked to house a bedroom, study and stair.

On the first level, the existing front room (to the street) was retained and the ceiling lifted, which restored the lovely proportions of the room. The windows were changed to French doors that open onto the new balcony. The



Windows in the stairwell provide natural light and a view of the action

after



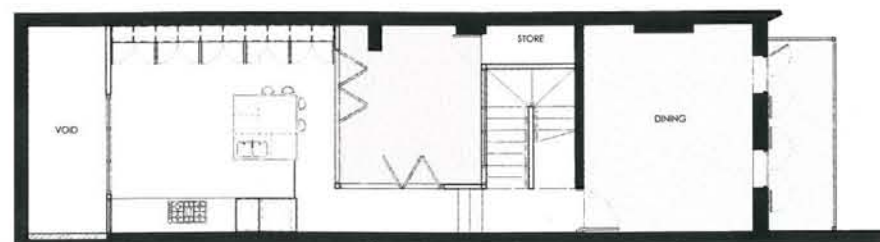
Section

Section

after



Second floor



First floor



Ground floor

remaining back of the existing house was pulled down and the courtyard, paired with stair, and kitchen were added to level one.

Up on the second level, the stairs terminate at the roof terrace, which has a lovely green-wall garden. This came about as the nature of such a tight urban site meant there wasn't much room for traditional garden planting — much to the disappointment of the owner, a keen gardener.

Instead, the walls of the roof terrace were cloaked in green walls, which play host to a wide variety of textural and colourful plants including herbs, strawberries and tomatoes, which can be added to the family's meals. They bring life, interest and softness to the private space.

A new bathroom with a vibrant green mosaic wall and a living/TV room were also added to level two and complete the urban oasis that is now so very different from its former lives.

"It is difficult to pick a favourite part of the renovated space... guests are always enthralled by the central courtyard space, the way the light plays with the wonderful bold colours, the connection between inside and out, and the vibrancy of the shifting façade of opening and closing doors," says Shaun.

"The house has been completely transformed and offers a wonderful sense of discovery as you meander up and through the house and find light, airy rooms that open to the outdoors in different ways."

Frosted glass provides abundant light — yet shelters the bathers from the courtyard below



project particulars

This project was designed by
 CARTERWILLIAMSON
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 Summer Hill NSW 2130
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This project was built by
 HAMPSTEAD HOMES
Tel: 02 9618 4316
Mobile: 0418 254 422
Licence Number: 126765c

Flooring
Kitchen + bedroom: Spotted gum timber
Dining: Existing timber
Living + stairs: Carpet
Outdoor: Tallow-wood timber deck

Walls
All plasterboard walls painted with Dulux Antique White USA
Ground level: Existing sandstone walls were re-pointed
Courtyard space: Central courtyard and rear wall clad in lightweight FC cladding, framed by natural anodised aluminium batons

Kitchen
Benchtop: Stainless steel
Splashback: Bisazza tiles — Zebra
Cabinetry: Dulux Antique White USA — satin two-pack polyurethane cupboards
Other: Abey Gessi pull-out tap, Highlander three-burner cooktop, live rangehood, Bosch dishwasher, Franke Planar sink, AEG oven

Bathroom
 Vixel mosaics 30x30 from artedomus, Virtu Circuit accessories, Caroma cube basin, Grohe Concetto tapware

Lighting
 Lumascape in-floor uplights (to highlight the sandstone on ground level), white downlights, pendants

Windows + external doors
 Broadview aluminium commercial grade — natural anodised finish for bifold doors, windows and louvres by Breezway

Outdoor
Roof terrace and ground level: Eco Pave Pavers 400x400mm