

JESSE BENNETT STUDIO

Tjuringa house re-imagines and retells the story of this site as a new adaptable family home, conjuring the essence and character of the previous existing home and applying it to a new programme that resonates with a new family and extended future family structures that may evolve.

Tjuringa is a cue taken onboard from the client's suggestion that the home or site is similar to an aboriginal Tjuringa artefact. Either a timber or stone carved long oblong shaped stick, where the carvings communicate mythological dreaming, stories of man and great mythic beings. Asserting a continuity of life and human mortality, the stories can be passed on through generations and naturally become adapted and or embellished each time they are retold.

The sweeping shapes and rounding ends of the sticks/stones were adopted early in the design development phase and easily became a suitable design motif for many elements throughout the building details.

The original concept was to retain the existing brick perimeter walls, redesign internal layouts and float a new concrete sail over the top, which would allow much natural light and ultimate flexibility to the plan. Unfortunately, and with much dismay, the original walls were not structurally sound to perform, and with this it was decided the house would be built anew, recycling as many materials as possible, and retaining the same two storey brick wall perimeter plan.

The programme bunkers down into the hillside and utilizes the brick structure as a place of refuge, housing many private and secret spaces to the West, and opens out to the Eastern view side to embrace the morning sun and entertain guests. Additional new concrete and glass structures pop out of the old brick perimeter on the Eastern side to take advantage of the expansive valley views and survey well established garden acres.

The concrete roof cap appears to float over the structure, sweeping and stretching as a fluid canvas, suspended between 5 monumental scale columns. The two main functions of this heavy element is to set the home down low into the hillside and shield from notorious Toowoomba Westerly winds that roar through, and secondly to alleviate overlooking into the home from the trafficked road above.

There is a definite exploration of scale and blurring of building classification, applying monumental relic scaled column elements to suspend the roof while also reducing down to human residential scale at ground level with the tall skinny brick archways. The building will play with time and we hope for it not to be from any distinguishable period / style of Architecture. Many roof gardens and plantings were given priority throughout the design and shall help soften the hard edges and become overgrown, creating intrigue and delight, a relic to be discovered, explored and reinterpreted.

Site: 26,038m²

House Area: 723m²

Bedrooms: 5

Bathrooms: 6

