

ALFRED HOUSE

In a Nutshell

Alfred House is an addition and reconfiguration of an existing two storey, two bedroom terrace, with a tired lean-to that had little relationship with the exterior space. The client wanted us to replicate one of our previous projects, Vader House, as they liked the idea of a centralised courtyard. It was an interesting idea for us to revisit and to evolve, as we were able to push the concept further due to the property's connection with the laneway. The big challenge was that Alfred had less than half of Vader's budget.

Embracing the laneway

Why do we have all these residential laneways that everyone fears and hides from? Why not embrace them as fun, cool spaces to be played in and used. It's a topical subject at the moment, with a council led push for us to use our communal zones. Here, by building on the boundary and internalising the back garden, the clients now have this open area which nobody uses. By opening the doors to the back it extends their property and allows light and air to pour in.

The distance between us

The lean-to was removed and the space redesigned to include an internal garden, kitchen/laundry, living/dining room, bathroom, (mezzanine) office and store room/garage - for the client's prized motorbike. Rather than placing the addition directly on the rear of the house, we moved it back to the boundary laneway. In doing so we essentially turned the dodgy little lightwell that you find in most terrace houses, into an entire garden. With a backyard you have to choose to go outside, whereas here you don't have to make that decision, the walls easily fold away to activate the space in a more natural way.

The Drop

The floor level of the rear addition is sunken to a depth of 600 millimetres from the height of the laneway. The floor drop results in a generous internal height and uncompromised internal volume but reduces the height of the building externally. The clients wanted to go through council without making any noise, which is difficult when you build in a backyard. In order not to overshadow or overlook, and to maintain the floor levels between the old and the new, we dropped the level down by four steps. Using glass panels directly on the rear lane which slide back fully, the view as you come from the old house is completely unobscured and creates a wonderful relationship to the laneway.

Detailing the detail.

Alfred was a real fine tuning exercise, unrelenting on every detail whilst working to a tight and constrained budget. The way the doors in the kitchen come together without the use of a central column, the deceptive mirror splashback, use of perforated steel to filter light, the way the back glass window opens up completely without a fixed panel - it all required the greatest of effort but appears effortless. There are also great moments of discovery, the street art by Order 55, specially commissioned by the clients, that adorns the original rear facade, and the canary yellow bathroom that dazzles in the otherwise pure white.

Sustainability.

Like all of our buildings, sustainability is at the core of Alfred House. We've introduced North-facing glass and perforated metal awning to enable passive solar gain. All windows are double glazed with thermal separated frames. White roofs drastically reduce urban heat sink and heat transfer internally. High performance insulation is everywhere. Along with active management of shade, and passive ventilation demands on mechanical heating and cooling are drastically reduced. A large water tank has been buried within the courtyard. All roof water is

captured and reused to flush toilets and water the garden. Where possible we have sourced local trades, materials and fittings. The new hydronic heated concrete slab provides a large area of thermal mass. Partial submersion reduces surface area and stabilises the internal temperature further.

Please contact Austin Maynard Architects if you have any questions about *THAT* House. info@maynardarchitects.com

Architect:

Austin Maynard Architects (formerly Andrew Maynard Architects)
www.maynardarchitects.com

Project team

Andrew Maynard, Mark Austin

Site / Floor Area:

142m² site / 155m² floor area

Completion date: December 2015

Builder: TCM Building Group

Engineer: Hive Engineering

Landscape Architects: Bush Projects

Artist (wall mural): Seb Humphreys - Order 55

Planning Consultant: Hansen Partnership

Building Surveyor: Code Compliance

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Tess Kelly

Fraser Marsden

300 word description

Alfred House is the addition and reconfiguration of an existing two storey, two bedroom terrace, with a tired lean-to that had little relationship with the exterior space. The client wanted us to replicate one of our previous projects, Vader House, as they liked the idea of a centralised courtyard. We were able to push the concept further due to the property's connection with the laneway.

The lean-to was removed and the space redesigned to include an internal garden, kitchen/laundry, living/dining room, bathroom, (mezzanine) office and store room/garage, for the client's prized motorbike. Rather than placing the addition directly on the rear of the house, we moved it back to the boundary laneway. In doing so we essentially turned the dodgy little lightwell, that you find in most terrace houses, into an entire garden. With a backyard you have to choose to go outside, whereas here you don't have to make that decision, the walls easily fold away to activate the space in a more natural way.

Alfred was a real fine tuning exercise, unrelenting on every detail whilst working to a tight and constrained budget. The way the doors in the kitchen come together without the use of a central column, the deceptive mirror splashback, use of perforated steel to filter light, the way the back glass window opens up completely without a fixed panel - it all required the greatest of effort but appears effortless

Sustainability is at the core of Alfred House. We've introduced North-facing glass and perforated metal awning to enable passive solar gain. All windows are double glazed with thermal separated frames. White roofs drastically reduce urban heat sink and heat transfer internally. High performance insulation is everywhere.