

ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

ALSOCAN ARCHITECTS

Photography: Andrew Morant & David Beynon



Architects David Beynon and Jane McDougall of Alsocan Architects bought this small terrace with the intention of using it as a home and office. The terrace, with its 'shotgun' corridor down one side, had the usual configuration of external rooms – separate bathroom, laundry and toilet.

As a means of developing a profile to the street, the small front garden was redesigned to include extra space for the front office. Two separate entrances were also designed, one for the office, the other for the dwelling. 'We really needed to create the feeling of going home after work and to give the living space a sense of seclusion from the busy street', Beynon says. The two front rooms were retained for the practice, but the north-facing kitchen and outbuildings were removed.

Through the Victorian-style front door, the original polished floorboards give way to polished concrete. 'This new fin wall allows more light to enter the passage. It acts as an interlocking mechanism between the two styles', Beynon says. Into the separate living area, the curved hoop pine wall is directed towards the light. The mezzanine bedroom remains partially obscured from below.

The boat-like structure, which contains the bedroom, also acts as the canopy for the kitchen. The architects felt it was important to keep many of the quirky features that had been added to the terrace by the previous owners. The old kitchen cupboards were retained but repainted in candy pinks and mint greens. A remodelled 1950s stove and oven takes pride of place in the kitchen, along with a table setting from the same period.

The house is about creating a feeling of space. As Beynon explains: 'This room is just over three metres wide, but by slanting this dividing wall (containing the bathroom and laundry), the room appears much larger'. If you're wondering about the name, Alsocan goes back to the time David and Jane were working in Singapore. As McDougall says, 'Every time we were asked if a task was possible, the reply would be 'also can', meaning anything was possible'.



