

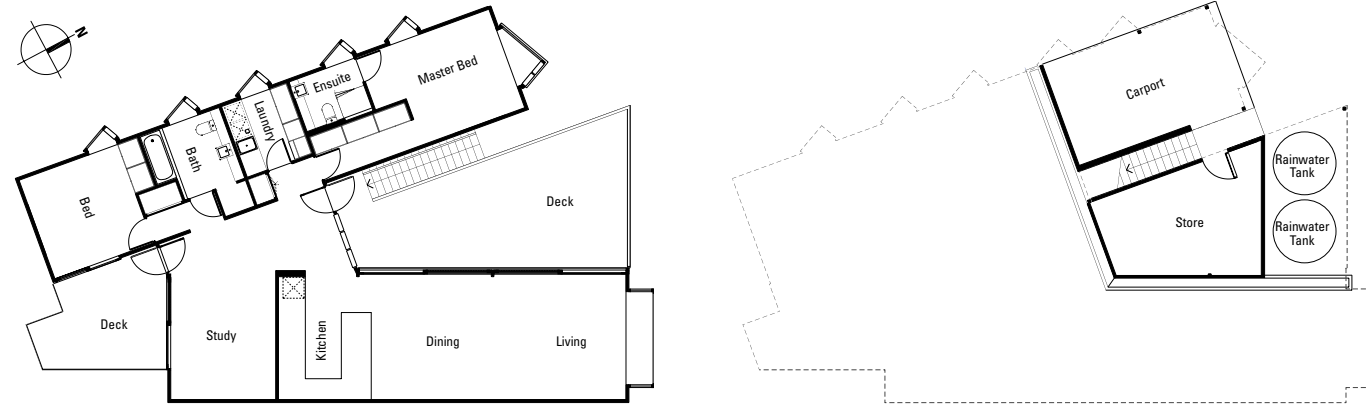


VIEWS FROM AFAR

A bayside home in sympathy with its surroundings

By Judy Friedlander

“As I roamed the wild bush behind Bayview as a child, collecting wildflowers, I think I had already developed a passion for the Australian landscape and its flora and fauna”



Sydney's Pittwater region takes a strong hold on anyone fortunate enough to have spent their childhood there.

The towering gum trees, ancient sub-tropical tree ferns and flowering plants, abundant bird life and protected waterways combine to leave an indelible mark on the memory.

Despite living for the past 40 years in Canada, the owner of this Bayview property has always dreamt of returning to her childhood haven where she spent every weekend holidaying with her family.

“The land is a small part of a property that was in my family for four generations,” she says. “My great grandfather bought a couple of acres in 1908 and built a holiday cottage on the edge of what was a great wilderness in those days.

“As I roamed the wild bush behind Bayview as a child, collecting wildflowers, I think I had already developed a passion for the Australian landscape and its flora and fauna.”

The house was built by local architects Utz-Sanby via yearly face-to-face meetings and phone and email communication. The owner

says the architects were simpatico to her desire to “blur the boundaries between inside and outside, to be able to see in all directions, to see the birds flying, the majestic tress on the hillside and the moods of the water and the shores of Pittwater”.

She also wanted a house that trod lightly on the environment, hence it was important to her that the architects had sound eco principles and a track record of sustainable design.

Says architect Duncan Sanby: “The house has been designed for minimum site disruption and to take advantage of the natural contours of the land.

“The living areas are centred on a large timber deck, which is almost a full storey above the ground and is evocative of being on a ship’s bow.”

Sanby explains that the elevated platforms of the house take advantage of the best views and aspect the site has to offer: opening up to the bays and inlets of Pittwater while also capturing cool sea breezes and maximising access to northern sun.

The owners felt strongly about not disrupting

the natural vegetation, and protecting the substantial eucalypts. A bush regeneration team from Total Earth Care was engaged to re-establish and protect the local ecology. Total Earth Care’s Andrew McGahey says that the owners are like many Pittwater locals who have grown up in the area and “are passionate about the tall native trees and the bush”.

“The Pittwater spotted gum forest is an endangered ecological community and is protected,” says McGahey. “These gum trees have hollows which house many endangered species such as the powerful owl, koalas, squirrel gliders and quolls.”

He says that the local ecosystem also features the Macrozamia “which is like a tree fern and is a very primitive plant dating from the age of the dinosaurs. The owners wanted to recreate and conserve what was left.”

Keeping the house size small was a priority, says the owner, to allow the block’s natural assets to feature. “It is only as big as it needs to be for our requirements,” she says. The 146 square metre house is miniscule in comparison to the 1500 square metre block that it occupies.



The house is built on piers, which (coupled with the house’s modest size) helped keep site excavation to a minimum and maximises access to views and cooling sea breezes. It also creates a space for two 4500 litre rainwater tanks, among other things.



The expansive tallwood deck is the centrepiece of the house, drawing you outside to relish the surrounding forest and sea views.



High-level louvres and openable windows maximise light and opportunities for cross ventilation and venting of hot air, and ensure those all-important views are present in every living space.

“The land is a small part of a property that was in my family for four generations”

“The house is built on piers and this kept excavation to a minimum, but it still allows us to use the space under the house for a carport, rainwater tanks and storage area.”

The home’s many windows allow for highly effective illumination, ventilation and those all-important views.

“The wedge shape of the house affords the inhabitants privacy while making the most of the aspects and views from every room,” says Sanby.

“On the western elevation, a series of angled bay windows provides views from the bedrooms and bathrooms and form a three-dimensional and rhythmic facade.”

Sanby explains that cross-ventilation is optimised by the high-level louvres on all sides of the house, combined with the fact that the rooms are not too deep.

Northern light infuses the house and enters the central area through strategically placed windows framing the two wings.

“The flat roof in between the two pitched roofs allows light to enter from the north even into the south-facing rooms,” says Sanby.

“The high ceilings with high windows looking out onto the surrounding greenery give the house a wonderfully light and spacious feeling,” says the owner. “The open-plan living area which includes the decks feels very spacious – while the bedrooms in the other wing feel quite private.

“I just love being in the master bedroom and being able to look out the window at the great limbs of the *Eucalytus punctata* and the turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*), and see the cockatoos in the distant spotted gums.

“It is such a thrill to have this beautiful house. It is my dream come true.”



Sustainable Features

Bayview Residence

Designer	Utz-Sanby Architects
Website	www.utzsanby.com
Builder	Steele Associates
Location	Bayview, NSW
Project type	New building
Project cost	\$750,000
Photography	Marian Riabic

Hot water

- Quantum compact 270L heat pump hot water system

Water saving

- 2 x 4500L rainwater tanks for garden, washing machine and toilet flushing

Passive heating & cooling

- Natural ventilation
- R1.0 foil-faced Autex Greenstuf building blanket
- R3.2 Autex Greenstuf batts
- R2.5 Acousti-Therm batts
- R2.0 Quietstuf batts
- Sub-floor concertina boil batts

Active heating & cooling

- Hunter Pacific Concept ceiling fans

Building materials

- Carter Holt Harvey Ecoply cladding
- Tallowood flooring and decking
- Colorbond roof and cladding to stair
- Powder coated aluminium door frames
- Western red cedar window frames

Windows & Glazing

- Breezeway louvres

Lighting

- Fluorescent battens
- Wall mounted up-lights

Other

- Bush regeneration by Total Earth Care (www.totalearthcare.com.au)
- Minimal site excavation
- The size of the house and decks is modest and covers only a portion of the 1500m² site