

MELBOURNE MODEST

A Melbourne architect comes up with **clever solutions** when creating extra space at a 1970s brick house by Merchant Builders on the Mornington Peninsula

Earthy appeal

In this home extension, hoop pine plywood boards were used internally for walls and built-in elements such as shelves and cupboards. The absence of handles is both simple and economical.

Almost monastic

Only a few key pieces of furniture were needed for comfort in the living area, including a Jardan "Milo" sofa, which provides a lovely contrast to the space, in both colour and form. →

** a clean-lined, modern sofa fits with the simple design*



who lives here?

Architect Clare Cousins designed the home extension for clients Jude and Tony.
Clarecousins.com.au

History lesson Merchant Builders, an innovative project home developer, built the original house in the 1970s, offering integrated courtyards, open-plan living and a meaningful connection between inside and out.

Leafy outlook

The connection to the outdoors was well-considered, with glimpses of the pier and water through trees enjoyed from the north-facing deck.



Design nous

Architect Clare Cousins, pictured, responded to the owners' brief of creating a simple space to retreat with a self-contained pavilion.



Strong & tough

"This area has a lovely milky light by day and glows by night, indicating the pavilion is occupied," Clare says of the polycarbonate stairwell that joins the pavilion to the original house.

Freshen up

The kitchen – and the rest of the original house – was also updated with a lick of white paint. Vinyl and carpet floors were stripped back, with the existing concrete floors polished to unify the spaces.



THE OUTCOME OF A BUILD doesn't always echo the details of the original plan, but is usually the result of the hurdles encountered along the way – or, more so, how they were solved. This was the case for Melbourne architect Clare Cousins, whose clients Jude and Tony owned an existing, much-loved holiday house on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, which had been commissioned by Jude's mother in the 1970s. While the couple didn't want to drastically change the original house, they needed more space and privacy so that when their grown-up sons and partners came to visit they wouldn't feel on top of each other.

"The original house was a Merchant Builders project and was very well-sited to face north, sitting far back on the block with a sloping area at the front," Clare says. With the architect keen to "touch" the existing building lightly, and with little desire to bolt something onto the back of the house, the idea of a self-contained pavilion gradually emerged. "Jude has good relationships with her neighbours and didn't want to be making a big statement," Clare recalls. "Rather, she sought something that was modest, even humble, where the sand could fall off your feet. She did also want some glimpses of the pier and the water through the treetops."

The original house is set on a long, meandering drive, with a 10m band of vegetation concealing it from the street. To minimise the impact of the new structure – and to allow it to blend in with the vegetation – it was decided to build the pavilion from western red cedar timber. To complement the exterior, hoop pine plywood is used throughout the interior on walls, ceiling and many of the built-in →

Living lean

While the pavilion doesn't have an official kitchen, a small porcelain sink and concealed bar fridge enable it to be partly self-contained.

cupboards and shelves. In the contained space (46 sq m, plus deck), using the same material gives it a more expansive feeling. A polycarbonate stairwell is the pivotal linking structure, bridging the timber of the new pavilion and the brick of the original home. "The clients wanted a low-maintenance solution and, although protected with a timber oil, the exterior timber is designed to slowly grey and disappear further into its setting," Clare adds.

As the size of the pavilion is modest, it was important the plan, and flow, of the space worked well. "Jude knew she wanted a bedroom, a living and dining space, but also a desk for working and a caravan-style kitchen with a bar fridge and little ceramic sink," Clare says. There was no need for air-conditioning as cross breezes cool the house through well-placed windows. There was also an unusual covenant on the land, which required that first-floor structures could only be located over a car-parking area. Clare embraced this idea as it meant that the building could be elevated, keeping as much ground and garden free as possible. The success of the new build is evident – when Jude and Tony visit on their own, they stay in the new pavilion, rather than the original house. Happy clients indeed. •

△ a built-in bench by the sink doubles as a desk

Extra touches

The bedroom is in a raised section of the pavilion, with sliding doors allowing for separation and privacy. Clare customised the clients' existing queen-size bed with a plywood base. →

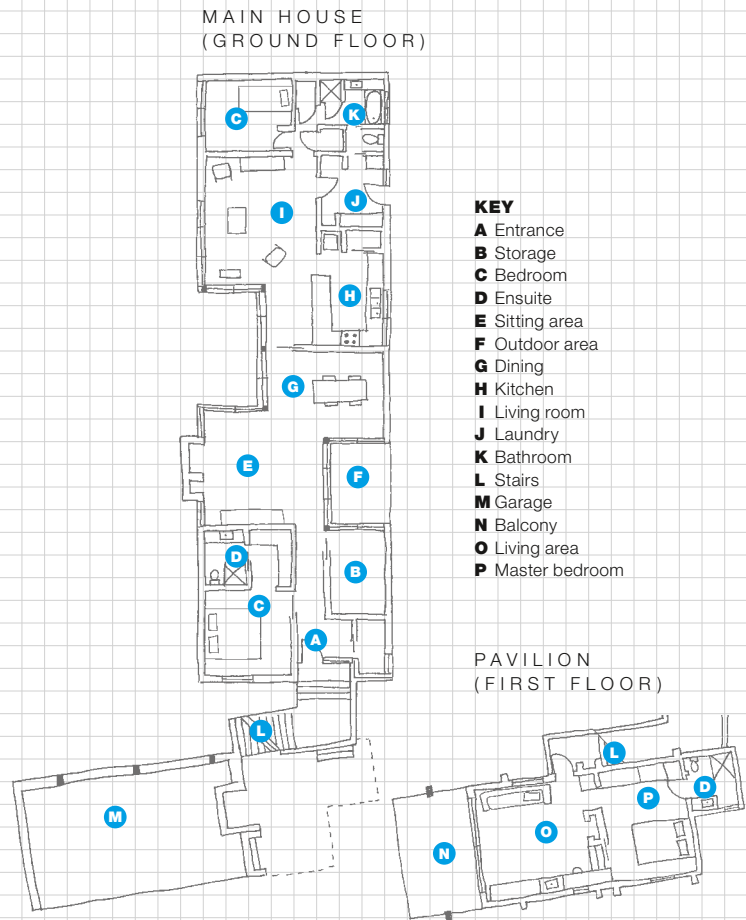


FINISHES

OUTDOOR CLADDING Select Tight Knot raw **Western Red Cedar** with Cutek Preserving Oil in Walnut Stain (A), about \$60 a sq m raw, Cedar Sales. **INTERIOR WALLS** Imported non-structural CD-grade **plywood** (B; 2.44m x 1.2m x 12mm), \$34 a sheet, Bunnings. **KITCHEN TILES** Bega in **Gloss White** (C; 10cm x 20cm), from \$32.50 a sq m, Amber Tiles. **FLOORING** Boralstone polished concrete in **Riverquartz** (D) from Boral. **INTERIOR PAINT** Porter's Paints Low Sheen Acrylic in **Snow White** (E), \$98 for 4L. For stockists, see page 175.



E INTERIOR PAINT - MAIN HOUSE



Bright idea

It was Clare's suggestion to update the original house with the white paint job and polished concrete floors. These simple initiatives modernise the space, while maintaining its character.

floorplan & still-life styling christina banos | photography sharyn cairns (lifestyle shots)



All afloat

There are subtle shifts in levels in the pavilion from the living space to the bedroom, which "steps up with the topography", Clare says.



Colours galore

Nud Collection "Classic Cord & Socket" **light** in Neon Yellow, \$68, Surrounding.

Dreamy landscape

Permafrost **print**, \$549, Freedom. 1.22m x 81cm.

Fly away

Butterfly **chair** in Yellow/White stripe, \$430, Angelucci 20th Century. Stainless-steel frame.

JUDE & TONY'S MOODBOARD

Simple designer pieces and primary colour pops bring comfort and energy to a spartan space

◇ super-comfy & stylish sofa



Dining, office, canteen

Hay "About A Chair" **chair** in White (AAC10), \$499.40, Corporate Culture.

Industrial art

Replica Jieldé "Signal" **table lamp**, \$149, Clickon Furniture. 1.1m high.



Attractive storage

Lab **jar** in Brown (500ml), \$9.95, Typo.

Sculptural form

Hedren ceramic **vase**, \$19.95, Amalfi.

Versatile beauty

Milo brushed-linen **sofa** in Chambray, from \$4620, Jordan.

Baby gourmet

Le Creuset mini **casserole dish** in Cerise Red, \$18, Peters Of Kensington. 14cm diameter including handles.