

Surrounded by the garden and often bathed in light and sunshine, the open-plan kitchen/living/dining room is the most-used and well-loved area of the home

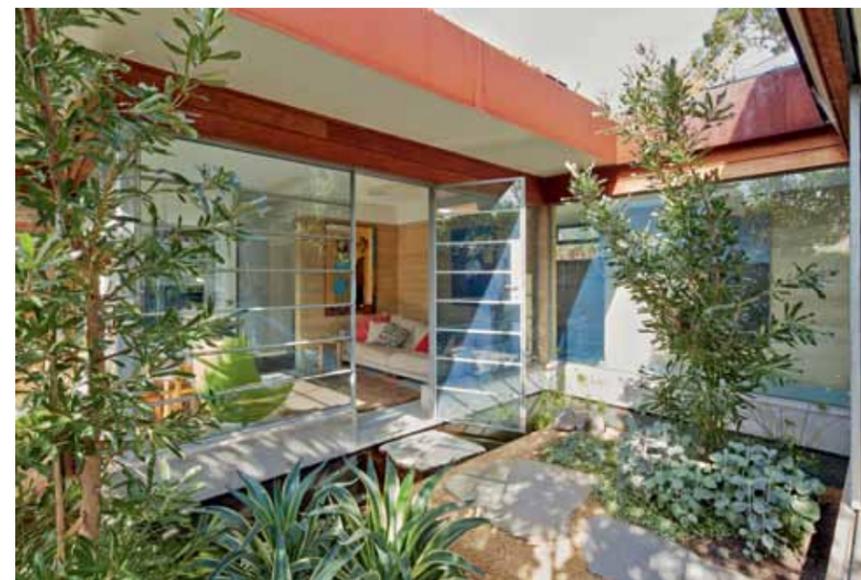
# The meaning of home

*This design explores the ideas of family and environmental sustainability in a private, light-filled Sydney home that is surrounded by lush greenery*

*The glass walls of the living space bring the garden inside and, combined with lofty ceilings, create the feeling of a lush city oasis*



*Sarah's main direction for the home design came from considering issues of privacy and environmental sustainability while also exploring the concept of the family home*



**T**he homeowner and architect of this project in Sydney's Northbridge relished the idea of having complete freedom to design the family home and explore environmental design options. While she was careful to pay respect to the original 1940s-era brick bungalow house, her direction for the home design came from considering issues of privacy and environmental sustainability while also exploring the concept of the family home.

In keeping with the sustainable design concept, as much of the original house as possible was kept. A bedroom, studio and bathroom were added upstairs and the entire roof was replaced to

unify the new with the old. The previous kitchen and laundry had been subject to alterations and additions over the years and were removed to make way for a new kitchen and an open-plan family/dining room at the back of the house. Another bedroom and study were also incorporated into the new design and the existing pool and surrounding area were renovated, also incorporating a shower and small bathroom.

As rooms were being removed and the structure of the home changed, materials were salvaged and recycled wherever possible. Bricks from demolished walls were kept and the timber from the old roof beams was milled on site and

**ABOVE LEFT** "The existing steel windows were some of the features that I first fell in love with when we bought the property and these recall International Modernism," says Sarah, along with other design elements such as the flat roof and asymmetrical overhangs  
**OPPOSITE PAGE TOP** Big glass sliding doors open up the entire living room, bringing the outdoors in and creating the feel of a pavilion

re-used as joinery inside the home. Recycled timber was also used for the home's external cladding and for the timber floorboards.

After recycling, the second important factor for good environmental design is passive solar control so every room was located to have good access to the sun. When it came to the kitchen, the morning sun was important to it too but it needed to be in the centre of the house as it functions as a social hub. A small courtyard was therefore created on the east side of the kitchen and the roof was cut away to allow in the morning sun — problem solved!

Thinking beyond the way the home works internally, it was designed with its external environment and the surrounding neighbourhood

in mind. With visitors also in mind, the entrance was moved further along the laneway, ensuring it was at the centre of the plan and away from the busy street corner.

To ensure privacy from the laneway, a thick wall of services runs along this side. All the windows are either high or low so that no one can see inside, although that part of the house is still light and well ventilated. Exact shadow diagrams were also created, which meant the new renovations wouldn't cast any shadow onto neighbouring properties.

Clever concepts throughout ensure this home feels open and flowing, filled with light and a sense of openness, when in fact you cannot see into any private areas at all. The glass walls of

the living space bring the beautiful garden inside and, combined with lofty ceilings, create the feeling of a lush city oasis.

**more info?**  
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