

DESIGNING OUR COMMUNITIES

the Architecture of being Local



NZIA 2019 Auckland Architecture Awards Winner - Heritage by Salmond Reed Architects.



How has design changed to reflect a more sustainable way of living? Do design briefs for significant civic spaces include requests from clients to create outcomes that are more mindful of the environment?

What about renovations? How have styles and approaches to renovating evolved to include more sustainable building and design practices? We talked to some of the best local architects to understand the changes and future of design and how it will be shaping our local community.

When it comes to renovating heritage homes it is hard to go past Salmond Reed who has contributed to the conservation of many of the country's most important heritage sites as well as many character homes in the wider Ponsonby area. One recent award-winning heritage project is a beautiful home in St Marys Bay where architect Rosalie Stanley reinvigorated a character villa to a new level of glory. The St Marys Bay property had seen numerous renovations and reincarnations and both the owner and Rosalie wished to reclaim its heritage features while acknowledging some of the changes that are now part of the home's narrative.

"We decided not to replace a lot of the wooden joinery even though it wasn't in keeping with the original style of the house. Instead, we embraced the mix and match feel that reflected the story of the house and made it part of our design," explains Rosalie. As well as staying authentic to the history of the house, keeping the wooden joinery is also a sustainable choice. Pulling down a house and building a completely new one is probably the worst thing you can do in terms of sustainability," explains Rosalie. When considering the design for any renovation project, Rosalie always looks for what can be kept and re-used as well as specifying products that are sustainable and environmentally friendly.



Australasia's first certified Passive House. By Jessop Architects.

This is a practice echoed by architects in general, who are always looking for ways to improve the form and function of their designs. Darren Jessop of multi-award winning local architecture firm Jessop Architecture, believes sustainability is only part of the picture and that people are often misunderstanding the term in relation to architecture and innovation. "As architects, we have a big role to play in helping shape the future of our buildings and the way we live. Not just in design, but function, and looking for better-quality homes that have these key performance markers, like good insulation, airtight, warm and dust-free homes. A passive home has these," says Darren Jessop.

Darren designed New Zealand's first certified passive home and believes that ideas around sustainability can often be confused with principles of passive design. "Passive design is a performance standard of how we live in a home, like heating and cooling. Sustainable seems to be a word widely used with little understanding or respect. New Zealand was once one of the world's green-thinking countries, but I believe we have slipped somewhat. I guess the question is, how are we thinking to build a better nation?" asks Darren.



Jessop Architects designed and built this 'passive' extension to a rural property near Whitford.

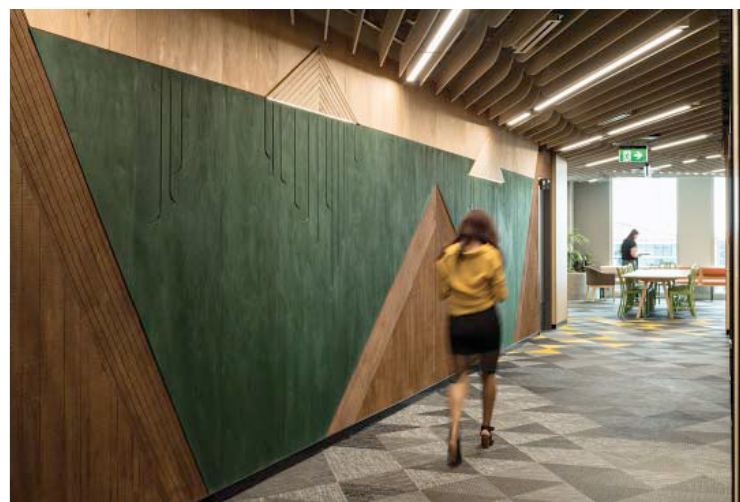
Improving the outcomes of the design process is at the heart of the work undertaken by local architecture firm Toa Architects. Toa is currently working on a Living Building Challenge project, which architect Te Ari Prendergast sees as an indication of how aware civic clients (like councils) have become around sustainability, environmental and community impacts. "The Living Building Challenge is the ultimate global standard in sustainable design," explains Te Ari. It works from a principle that every act of design and construction should make the world a better place. Using the analogy of a flower, the Living Building Challenge describes its regenerative framework as creating spaces that, like a flower, give more than they take.

Underpinning a design project with strong principles to guide the process is an approach that Toa Architects employs across all of its projects. "As architects, we have standards we hold ourselves to, but part of our process with clients is to set design goals and philosophies for a project. Looking for, or starting with a Māori narrative can be a good way to find out what a client's own design story is. It's a really natural place to start and build the design concept from," says Te Ari.

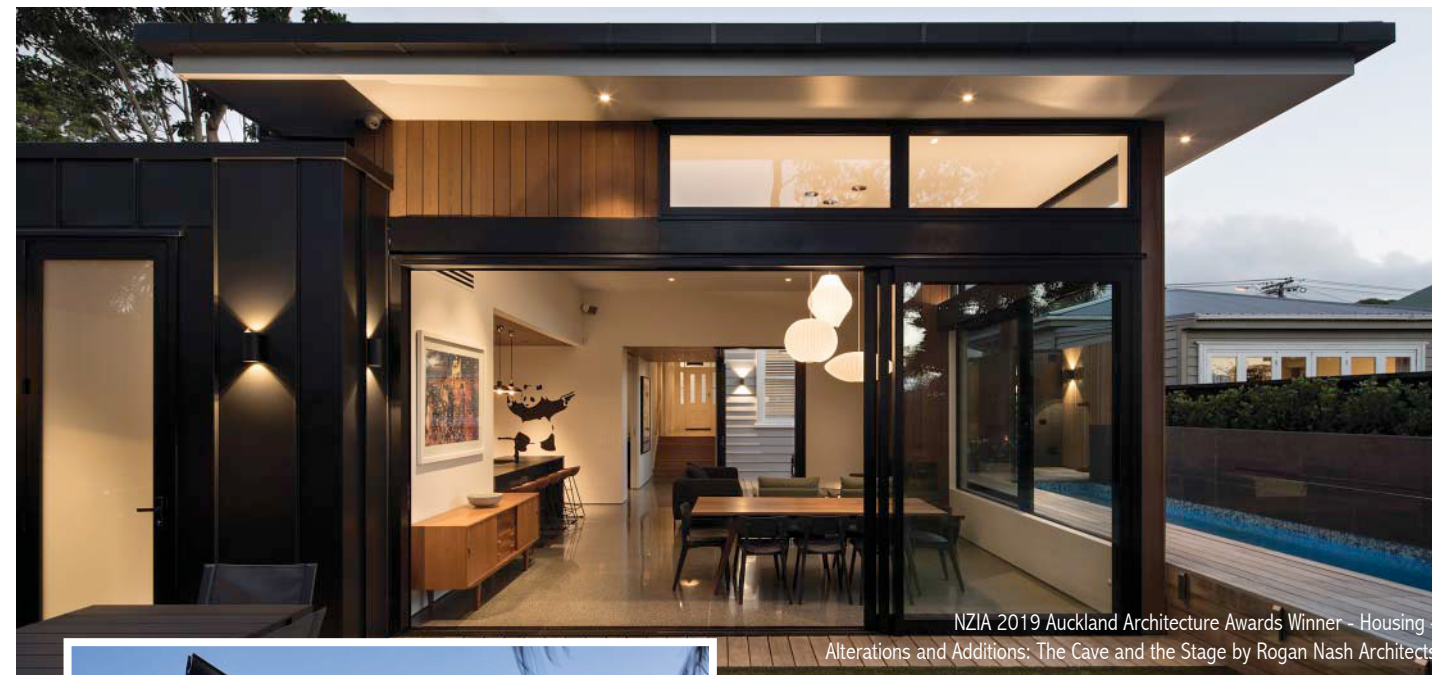
It's an approach that worked well for Toa Architects when it collaborated with 4Works on the ATEED HQ project. Toa and 4Works won a 2019 New Zealand Institute of Architecture Award for their ATEED HQ Interiors project as well as creating a space that worked on multiple levels. "We were able to bring a cultural layer and cultural narrative that captured the essence of the project," says Te Ari.

It was a project concerned with much more than just the aesthetics of the space. "Our process translated into a framework for how they [ATEED] worked. "We workshopped the design with different groups including staff, a core Māori team (including designer Tyrone Ohia), the project steering group and executive team to build the concept

of ngā hau e whā o Tamaki Makaurau. The idea is that we all come here, together, from different places and bring with us an energy that creates a narrative. From there a design concept that tells a story emerges. It's a story that can be moulded and adopted by the different groups that use and visit the space," explains Te Ari.



NZIA 2019 Auckland Architecture Awards Winner - Architecture Interiors: ATEED HQ by Toa Architects and 4Work.



NZIA 2019 Auckland Architecture Awards Winner - Housing - Alterations and Additions: The Cave and the Stage by Rogan Nash Architects



NZIA 2019 Auckland Architecture Awards Winner - Housing: The Blackbird by Rogan Nash Architects



Ponsonby architects Rogan Nash also won awards for two residential projects in the recent New Zealand Institute of Architecture Awards. The Blackbird — a striking contemporary home on a challenging inner city site employed a number of passive design principles and considered the principle of reduce, reuse and recycle as part of the design process. "The narrow north-south site did not allow the possibility of the ideal east-west floorplan. However, we were able to limit windows overall, and instead rely on the 'Stack Effect' to naturally vent the building," explains Rogan Nash architect, Eva Nash. Rogan Nash's design work incorporates core sustainability features like maximising solar gain, double glazing, cross ventilation and thermal mass to be heated by winter sun. "These cost no extra but make a huge difference to the overall sustainability and efficiency of the house," explains Eva.

Rogan Nash's second 2019 award-winning project — The Stage and Cave — was not only a stunning renovation of a classic villa but also an alteration with strong sustainability features. We created an efficient thermal envelope in this house with the use of double glazing filled with argon gas, extra insulation to the underneath and sides of the concrete slab, and extra insulation to the ceiling plus the house incorporates Photovoltaic power generation on the roof!

Whether it's a renovation project, a new contemporary home or a large commercial or civic project, architects and their clients are becoming increasingly mindful of designing and building in ways that are sustainable, practical and offering better overall quality. This includes in many cases creating buildings that contribute to a positive sense of community.

Inner city villas and bungalows with their low picket fences and connection to the streetscape are conducive to building a closer sense of community and public space. Residents aren't hidden away behind high fences and security gates but share a public domain where they can interact and participate with the wider community. "Auckland Council's fencing rule in heritage zones, that is, the front fences can't be more than 1.2m high and open is not only for heritage and aesthetic reasons, it is also because it encourages a sense of community. We see it as an opportunity to soften the streetscape with low fencing and hedging," says Rosalie.

Ideas of community and ensuring that a space doesn't just have a single use is also a principle of The Living Building Challenge and with the holistic approach of our local award-winning architects, it seems most likely that our community's future is in safe hands.