



A simple brief to update a lakeside home achieved a transformation of stunning proportions, writes **AMY DE LORE**.

## Green revolution



WHEN the owners of this lakeside home decided to renovate, their primary motivation was to have a house in which the living was on a single level.

What they got was an all but new home that not only achieves that goal but is both a showpiece of modern architecture and, in the owner's words, "just lovely to live in".

The house commands attention from its elevated aspect with its lime green fibre-cement panels and a rust-coloured exterior feature wall treated with an earthy metallic finish.

"I think you'd have to say we exceeded the brief with the exterior design," agrees designer Stephen Gray, of Liquid Architecture.

The starting block for this dramatic transformation was an architecturally designed 1950s split-level red-brick home, with garage and laundry underneath. The original three bedrooms have been retained but the living spaces have been opened up and expanded, with the addition of a laundry, second bathroom, new garage, courtyard and

entry foyer on what is now the single living level.

The protruding green wall on the front of the house is actually a cleverly disguised pop-out wardrobe. Because the main bedroom was too small for a built-in, Gray took the robe out beyond the wall boundary and used its outline on the building's exterior as a design feature.

An oversized door with a metallic finish opens to an understated but generously sized entry foyer that blends seamlessly with the adjacent open-plan living area when the dividing glass door is folded back.

Built-in bench seating around the foyer doubles as storage space and a brightly painted wall opposite the entryway picks up the home's signature theme of lime greens highlights (painted in the Dulux colours Juicy Lime and Gecko).

Greens also features on the benchtop of the kitchen at the back of the living area. It is a CraterStone colour that had gone out of production but Gray managed to track down some leftover panels from a supplier.

A television nook occupies the end of the room opposite the kitchen, while to the side of the room a loggia has replaced the original outdoor veranda and is now the dining area.

Windows, both louvred and fixed, have been installed all around this space, both to let natural

## renovation



**WOW FACTOR:** Lime is applied generously around the interior and exterior, with black framed windows accentuating the lake and bushland views.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Before and after shots show the extent of the conversion.  
*Photos and cover shot by Glen Thomas (A&P)*



light flood in and catch the summer breezes. A pull-back feature window at one end, when opened, appears to frame the lake and bushland vista as if it were an oil painting.

Gray opted to use black framing for windows and doors throughout the house because it accentuates the lake outlook. The owner was originally wary but is delighted with the effect and finds them striking against the Dulux White on White interior and the green exterior panelling.

The living space is illuminated by downlights, with a feature patch of tiny twinkling "star" lights a special request of the lady of the house.

Cabinetry throughout the house, including that in the kitchen and bathroom, has been colour-matched and linked by design to provide continuity. Even a free-standing display sideboard is custom-made in the same style.

The lime theme is picked up in the otherwise white bedrooms with a slim vertical panel of mosaic tiles.

The new rear courtyard off the loggia is paved in eye-catching checkerboard style, a feature that looks great but also has a practical application in making the area more enticing as a playground for the couple's young grandchildren.

The area where the downstairs garage and laundry once were now serves as a storage space,

*A pull-back feature window at one end, when opened, appears to frame the lake and bushland vista as if it were an oil painting*

but even that has been given an edge look with the use of custom-made metal screens to hide the piers and other under-house workings.

The front garden has been made over, with a sweeping driveway as its centrepiece.

Both client and architect are delighted with the result and Gray paid tribute to the builder, Deangelis Engineering, and the home owners, a business couple nearing retirement age, for their willingness to try something different.

Inevitably there were a few differences of opinion but for the most part the owners were happy to place the project in their designer's hands.

"If you use an architect, I think you've got to let them have their head with most things," one of the owners says. "We're very happy we get a lot of favourable comments about it, especially the lime green on the outside."

"And the house works – that's the main thing."

