

# Ipswich infill

The owner of this small urban infill block in Ipswich, Queensland, was eager to minimise excavation and preserve the existing vegetation when building her new home.

WORDS Anna Cumming

PHOTOGRAPHY Greg Harm

“[OUR CLIENT] ASKED FOR A SELF-SUFFICIENT, SUSTAINABLE home,” says architect Mick Hellen of aardvarc, who designed and delivered a 110-square-metre two-bedroom house with a north facing open-plan kitchen and living area wrapped in glazing. Large folding doors continue the living space outside onto a generous deck shaded by a mature mango tree.

The use of recycled materials where possible was also a key

part of the brief. Mostly lightweight timber frame construction, the house has a feature spine wall built of bricks reclaimed from a Sydney demolition. As well as providing design interest, the bricks act as a thermal store to help regulate internal heating and cooling.

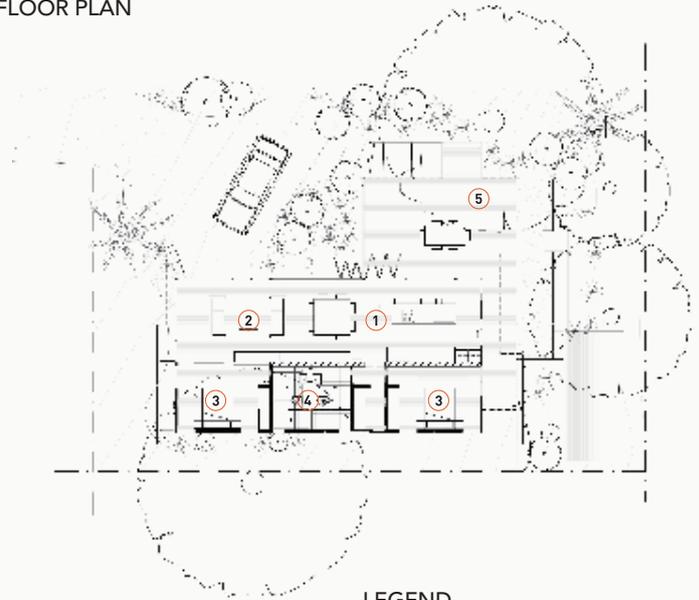
Elsewhere, the use of timber is extensive. “It adds character and warmth, and can tell a story,” explains Mick. Recycled hardwood rafters, floor joists and bearers were used for the kitchen and

bathroom cabinetry and for the decking, and care was taken to use locally grown and sustainably sourced timber for other building elements. The roof framing is of recycled Queensland spotted gum, and Greenpeace-certified New Guinea Rosewood ecotimber was chosen for the window and door joinery for its durability and stability.

The exterior walls are clad with grooved ECOply panelling and translucent polycarbonate sheet for cost efficiency, light admittance and to maintain views of the sky. Louvred windows in the living area and high under the raked roof of the rear half of the house allow for effective natural ventilation in the subtropical climate, and winter heating with solar panels, rainwater tanks and a greywater system make the home self-sufficient for power and water.

Despite some initial concerns over the design relating to the character zoning of the area, Mick says the local council have come to see the house as an excellent example of infill development in a character residential area. Most importantly, the homeowner loves it. “The project turned out even better than I expected,” she says. 🌱

FLOOR PLAN



LEGEND



- ① Kitchen/Dining
- ② Living
- ③ Bedroom
- ④ Bathroom
- ⑤ Deck

## Ipswich house

### —Specifications

#### Credits

##### DESIGN

Aardvarc

##### BUILDER

David James of Thirdson  
Construction under CS &  
TM Abberton Carpentry  
Service

##### PROJECT TYPE

New build

##### PROJECT LOCATION

Ipswich, QLD

##### SIZE

House 110 sqm

#### Sustainable Features

##### HOT WATER

– Solar hot water with electric boost.

##### RENEWABLE ENERGY

– 1.5kW solar PV system.

##### WATER SAVING

– Greywater treatment system ready for future connection  
– 20,000L polyethylene rainwater tanks.

##### PASSIVE DESIGN

– Recycled masonry heat-sink wall  
– Exterior shading screens on east and west elevations.

##### ACTIVE HEATING & COOLING

– Ceiling fans; Exterior fire pit.

##### WINDOWS & GLAZING

– New Guinea Rosewood ecotimber-certified timber-framed bifold doors & glazing  
– Operable Breezway louvres.

##### LIGHTING

– Compact fluorescent & LED lights from Inlite.

##### PAINTS, FINISHES & FLOOR COVERINGS

– Low VOC paints; Livos Alis decking oil used to finish the floorboards and joinery.

##### BUILDING MATERIALS

– Mixed species recycled hardwood timber used for decking and cabinetry  
– Nearly 3000 recycled dry-pressed bricks used for central load-bearing wall  
– Colorbond zincalume corrugated exterior cladding; Lysaght polycarbonate cladding on east and west elevations; Rough-sawn plywood exterior cladding  
– Knauf Earthwool insulation in walls and ceiling.