

QUEST FOR LIGHT

• TAYLOR KNIGHTS •

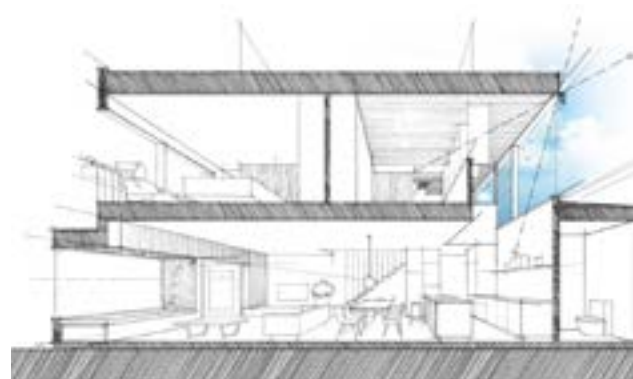
This renovation of an inner-city terrace meets the challenges of a long and narrow block with creative manipulation of space and light.

Photography by Sharyn Cairns



01 A double-height space fills the kitchen with light, drawing family and friends in a “moth to a flame” response.

01



The question has been presented to Taylor Knights many times before but it's still the perfect launching point for discussion of their Northcote House project: "How do you bring light and views into the depths of a terrace house?"

In the case of this long, narrow terrace in Melbourne's inner north, a south-facing backyard further necessitates the quest for light. The site lent itself to retaining the heritage frontage and tacking on a double-storey extension to the rear. The clients – a young, growing family – also required an open-plan kitchen, dining and lounge area.


That's where the standard-issue response ends – things take an unexpected turn in the kitchen. In contrast to the smaller rooms at the front of the house, the kitchen sits as an ethereal light well within a double-height space, with northern clerestory highlight windows and a skylight overhead. The clients love to cook and to surround themselves with family and friends and their kitchen plays the part, its shards of light prompting a "moth to flame" response. In the words of Peter Knights, who designed the project alongside co-director James Taylor, "the kitchen is the place to be and people naturally congregate there."

Peter and James were careful not to overcomplicate the materiality, taking nothing away from the interplay of space and light. Satin-white joinery reflects the light, while concrete with hydronic heating underfoot anchors the space. The floor's burnished finish was specified for its suitability to the robustness of family life.

"The kitchen is the focal point of the house so it needed a warm feel to it," says Peter. This is reflected in the tough spotted gum ply that lines a wall of joinery enclosing a European laundry, bulkheads, airconditioning units and storage space. By day, the ply basks in the sun; by night, the grain is illuminated by LED lights. The ply was chosen with the realities of life with kids and their bikes in mind. Likewise, the marble benchtop was chosen with a view to its developing a patina of marks over time.

Black overhead cabinets continue the perforations used throughout the house. The design was developed to accommodate the rangehood over the cooktop, with punctured holes allowing glimpses through to cups and plates. LED lights above and below add to the sense of levity.

A handcrafted spotted gum door pull marks the entry to the family bathroom, which services the original part of the house. The lower 2.4-metre ceiling was a necessary trade-off to allow northern sunlight into the kitchen's clerestory windows.

Mirror on the wall creates the impression of more space and reflects light from the louvre window. Like the kitchen, the bathroom's uncomplicated palette of stone tiles and painted plaster walls opens up the room and emphasizes light. A skylight above the shower brings yet another shard of sunshine into the compressed space. If the objective was simply to answer the question of light and views, Taylor Knights has done so comprehensively. Yet, the architects have also delivered a home that's delightful to use. Now unleash the kids. 



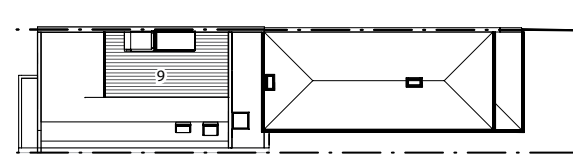
03



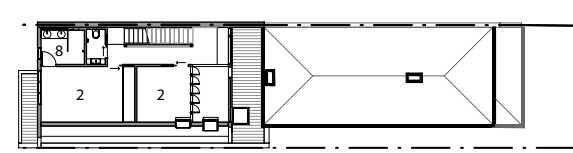
02 Dark New York marble brings intimacy and sophistication into the ensuite.

03 A large mirror reflects light from the skylight above the shower and creates the impression of more space.

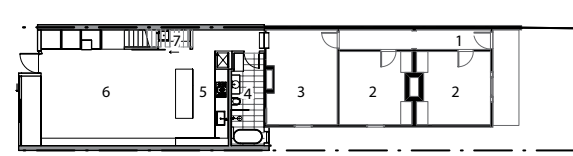
- 1 Entry
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Sitting
- 4 Bathroom
- 5 Kitchen
- 6 Living/dining
- 7 Laundry
- 8 Ensuite
- 9 Roof deck



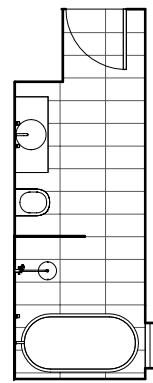
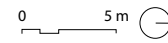
Roof deck plan 1:400



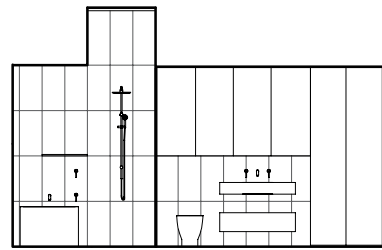
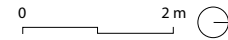
First floor plan 1:400



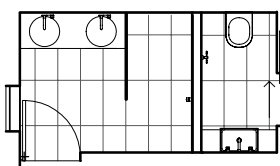
Ground floor plan 1:400



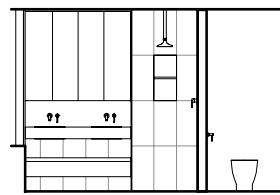
Bathroom plan 1:100



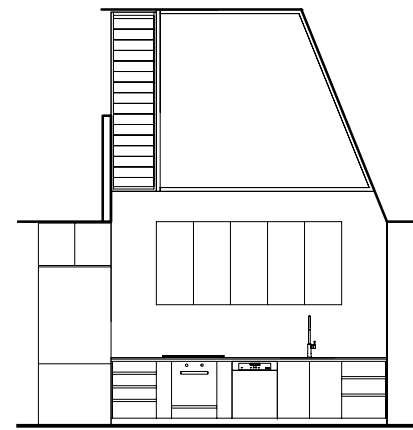
Bathroom elevation 1:100



Ensuite plan 1:100



Ensuite elevation 1:100



Kitchen elevation 1:100



04 Spotted gum ply and burnished concrete provide texture, warmth and robustness.



05 A wall of joinery encloses a laundry, bulkheads, airconditioning units and storage.

Architect

Taylor Knights
15/108 Moor Street
Fitzroy Vic 3065
+61 3 9417 6862
office@taylorknights.com.au
taylorknights.com.au

Practice profile

A design-focused practice with an emphasis on craft, innovation and sustainability.

Project team

Peter Knights, James Taylor

Builder

McKerlie Builders

Consultants

Joinery: Marant Industries
Furniture: Tescher Forge
Engineer: R. Bliem and Associates

Kitchen products

Internal walls: Perini white penny round tiles; Gyprock plasterboard in Dulux 'Vivid White'; blockwork walls in Dulux 'Domino'
Flooring: Burnished concrete
Joinery: Big River spotted gum cabinetry; CDK Stone Calacatta marble on island bench; Caesarstone benchtop in 'Snow'; Locker Group perforated sheet metal overhead cabinet doors
Lighting: Allied Maker Arc dome pendant; LPA Logan ceiling-mounted lights, Visi downlights and LED strip lighting
Sinks and tapware: Franke Bolero Box stainless steel sink; Sussex sink mixer from Reece
Appliances: Miele stainless steel oven, five-burner gas cooktop and semi-integrated dishwasher; Fisher and Paykel integrated fridge; Schweigen undermount rangehood
Furniture: Infiniti Pure Loop Binuance bar stools and Didier Brydie lounge from Cafe Culture and Insitu; custom dining table by Taylor Knights and Tescher Forge

Bathroom products

Internal walls: Perini black porcelain wall tiles; Gyprock plasterboard in Dulux 'Vivid White'
Flooring: Perini porcelain floor tiles
Joinery: CDK Stone Calacatta marble (downstairs bathroom) and New York marble (upstairs bathroom)
Lighting: LPA Visi downlights and LED strip lighting; Caravaggio wall light
Tapware and fittings: Sussex bath mixer, basin mixer, overhead shower and mixer and Mizu bottle trap, all from Reece
Sanitaryware: Stonebaths Justina freestanding bath; Omvivo Neo wall-hung counter basins, Laufen Living square counter basins and Axa back-to-wall toilet pans, all from Reece
Furniture: Anaca Studio Emi Pod; Douglas and Bec All Oak Mirror