

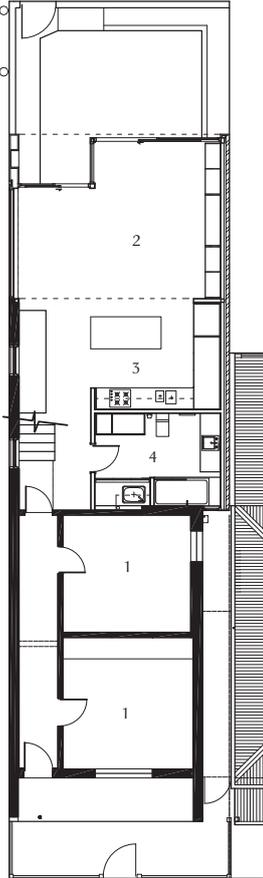
PROJECT

THE MULTITASKER

• NIC OWEN ARCHITECTS •

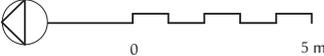
Extending the confines of a small Victorian terrace, Nic Owen Architects brings peace to the demands of family living.

Words by [Anna McCooe](#)
Photography by [Rhiannon Slatter](#)



- 1 Bedroom
- 2 Family
- 3 Kitchen
- 4 Bathroom

Ground floor plan 1:200



01 The kitchen shares its borders with a small office as well as living and dining areas.





Space, in Melbourne's inner city, may well be the final frontier. For the urban family living in this tiny Victorian terrace, it wasn't an obstacle that could be hacked full-throttle but rather one that took a more sensitive approach. Enter architect Nic Owen. Delicately and with considered resolve, Nic negotiated site restraints, heritage and planning controls and the principles of passive design to give his clients the space they so desired.

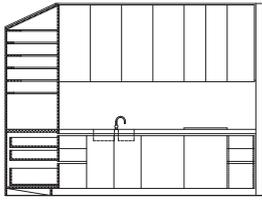
"We had very strict parameters to play with. The site is small and the area is very dense but a double-height extension would provide added light and vertical space on a very small footprint," says Nic.

Internally the space is still small, but every inch operates in overdrive to cater for urban family life. "We call it caravan design – fitting a lot of functions into very small spaces," says Nic. In classic architectural terms: less is indeed more. "People interact better in a well-designed small space, you just have to make it work well and work hard," he explains.

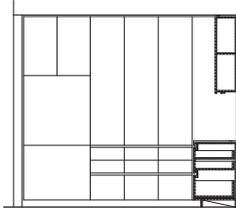
The kitchen joinery and the joinery of the whole home is the key to the success of the small terrace. Each piece was resolved as one to fit within the overall building envelope, while the abundance of accessible storage keeps the space unencumbered. Full-height

02 Full-height cupboards sit within the home as walls.

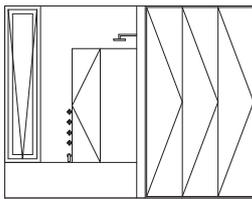
03 Timber accents and polished concrete deliver a calm space for respite.



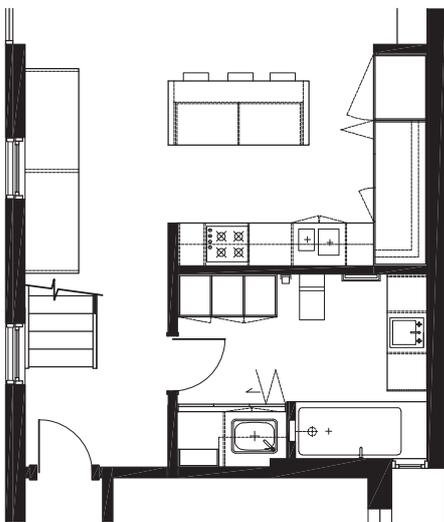
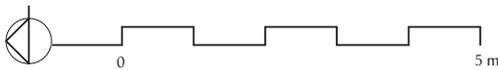
Kitchen east elevation 1:100



Kitchen north elevation 1:100



Bathroom/laundry elevation 1:100



Kitchen and bathroom 1:100



cupboards, with handleless doors sit within the home as walls. Kitchen appliances are integrated with cabinetry and a large pantry, with enough storage space for small appliances and utility space for preparing toast and coffee, is enclosed behind bifold doors.

The kitchen shares its borders with the living and dining space and even a small office to bring fluidity, ease and informality to the everyday. A pared back palette of solid Australian plantation blackbutt, white Laminex and a CaesarStone benchtop lends the open-plan area a feeling of unity and enhances space and light throughout.

The bathroom also works overtime as a laundry and utility space. The washing machine, dryer and shelving for sorting and folding are all hidden within a neat joinery unit, dissolving the need for a dedicated room.

As hardworking as it may be, the bathroom still delivers respite thanks to the honest simplicity of timber and polished concrete and a carefully placed window, which reveals glimpses of the private courtyard beyond. Photovoltaic cells and solar hot water panels on the north-facing roof also generate energy and hot water for an indulgent bathroom experience with conscience. K+B



Architect

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Practice profile

The practice specializes in residential architecture, that responds to each individual site and environment, creating unique and elegant forms that contribute to the wider community.

Project team

Nic Owen

Builder

Kleev Homes

Consultants

Joinery: Rochet Kitchens
Interiors: Nic Owen Architects

Time schedule

Design, documentation:

8 months

Construction:

7 months

Kitchen products

Internal walls: Plasterboard, painted; solid plaster rendered brickwork

Flooring: Blackbutt hardwood plywood sheet flooring, clear polished finish

Joinery: CaesarStone 'Ice Snow' kitchen benchtop; polished blackbutt plywood study, desk and low joinery unit benchtop; prelaminate Laminex 'White' joinery fronts with natural finish and ABS edging; solid blackbutt plywood joinery fronts; toughened glass splashback with 2-pac polyurethane colour to back

Lighting: Compact fluorescent; hidden strip fluorescent and fluorescent pendant lighting

Sinks and tapware:

Tradelink Afa Flow double bowl undermount kitchen sink; Tradelink Posh Solus kitchen mixer tap with spray

Appliances: Blanco underbench oven, cooktop, rangehood; Fisher & Paykel refrigerator; Bosch dishwasher

Doors and windows:

Commercial Aluminium 400 series box section, low-e double-glazed clear glass

Furniture:

Teak 1960s Swedish extendable dining table

Other: Artwork, oil on canvas by Josie Backhouse

Bathroom products

Internal walls: Plasterboard, painted; white tiles

Flooring: Polished exposed concrete with clear waterproof finish

Joinery: Solid blackbutt timber with clear 2-pac finish vanity benchtop; prelaminate Laminex 'White' natural finish with ABS edging joinery fronts

Lighting: Compact fluorescent; strip hidden fluorescent on auto sensor switch

Tapware and fittings:

Porsher tapware; Gen X accessories

Sanitaryware: Stirling pressed steel bath; Caroma Liano underslung basin

Doors and windows: Commercial Aluminium 400 series box section, low-e double-glazed clear glass; full-height flush panel 2-pac internal door and laundry bifolding doors

04 A unique angled roof frames the living spaces and deck.