



PROJECT

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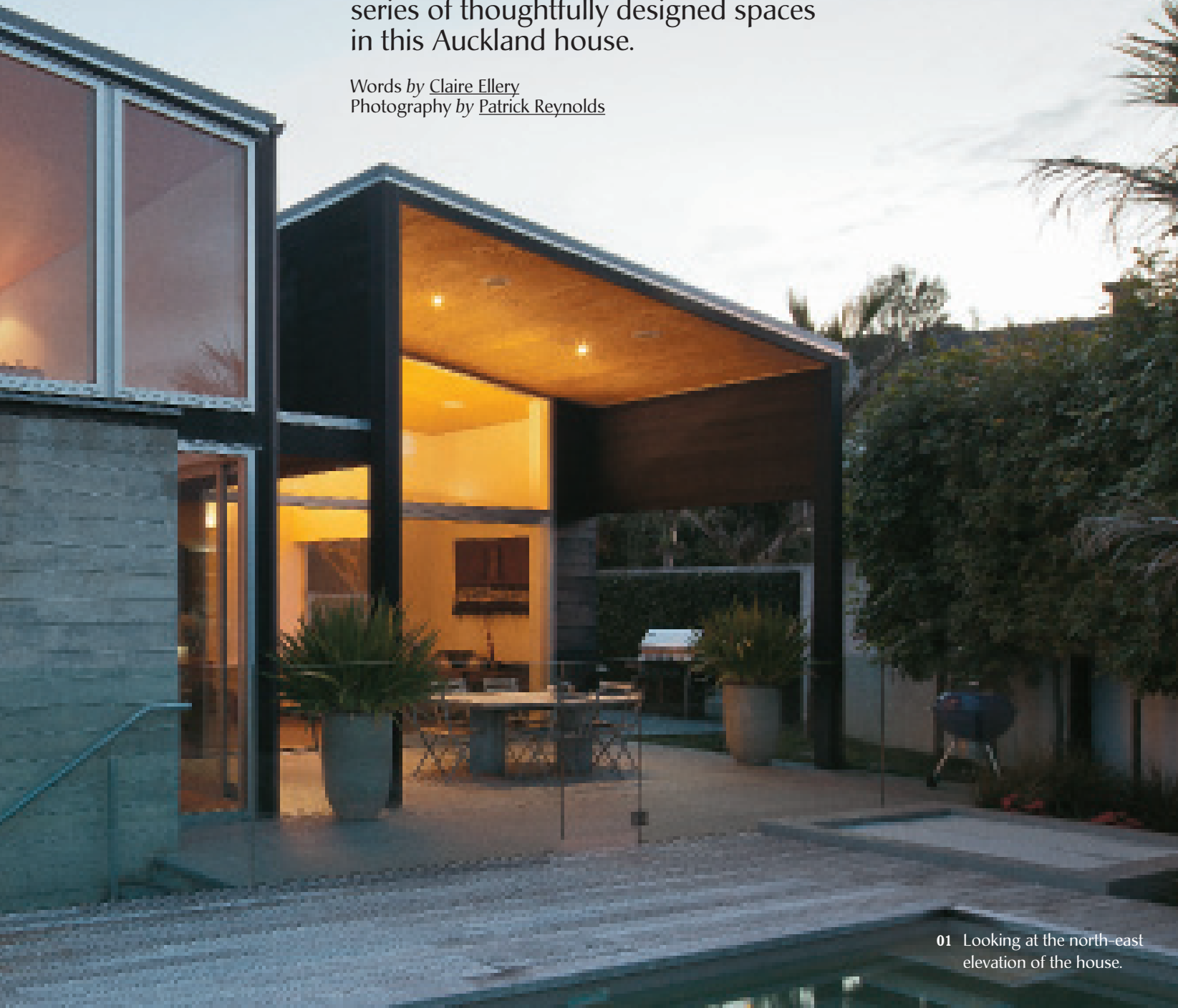
Birkenhead HOUSE by Crosson Clarke Carnachan Architects

• AUCKLAND •

A standout view is enjoyed from a series of thoughtfully designed spaces in this Auckland house.

Words by *Claire Ellery*

Photography by *Patrick Reynolds*



01 Looking at the north-east elevation of the house.



The owners of this house, designed by Paul Clarke of Crosson Clarke Carnachan Architects, commissioned Clarke to work on renovations to their house when they lived a few doors up the road. Finding the council restrictions onerous – Birkenhead is a heritage area – they decided to buy this section and start afresh. Restrictions still applied, of course, and to some extent shaped the plan of the house but were more manageable than making changes to an existing dwelling. The site has incredible uninterrupted views of the Harbour Bridge and Auckland city. It is also reasonably steep. The entrance to the house has a very low profile with a discreet eurotray pitched roof and dark-stained weatherboard walls. These were part of the effort to interpret and fit in with the surrounding streetscape and be respectful of the area’s heritage, says Clarke.

The house is full of nice moments. Arriving at the front door is the first. It is a huge, rough-hewn tōtara panel with inset cubes of multicoloured glass, designed by artist Carin Wilson. These dapple the entry hall with coloured light and remind the clients of the stained-glass windows at their previous home. The tōtara had been stored by the clients for many years – they had been waiting for the right project in which to use it.

The second standout moment is when the door is opened to reveal the view from the living area that sits beyond the entryway. It is an arresting sight. This floor is the middle of three and contains all the family living spaces – kitchen, dining area, living room and lounge. Outside on this level there is a pool, spa and outdoor dining room.

In the kitchen the tōtara is repeated in the wall cabinetry. The

island bench is a smooth white sculpture that the clients designed and was then made by a surfboard manufacturer with a can-do attitude. This space opens to double height in the lounge where there is a fireplace and an inset window nook. The second lounge sits behind this room and can be closed off with large sliding doors.

Downstairs, three of four bedrooms are occupied by the children and the fourth a guest room that is currently being used for band practice. The children share a clever bathroom space that has frosted-glass dividers separating the shower and toilet from the main room where the vanity contains three sinks so that there is no need to queue.

Upstairs, a study is open to the double-height lounge. It sits beneath a curved timber ceiling that gathers height on the south-east side towards the view. The master bedroom and ensuite are on this floor. There are no curtains or blinds in the house but these rooms have external timber screens that can slide across to shield the clients from bright morning sun.

Every bedroom and most of the living rooms in this house look out at the view. The house is very close to neighbours on both sides but feels private wherever you are. It is a tall house, but sits low and discreet from the street. Inside it is awash with light and has a sense of warmth and enclosure. Timber, concrete and glazing give the house textural depth and a series of varied heights in the spaces stops it from feeling huge or impersonal.

This house responds to the neighbourhood and its site thoughtfully. It is made up of a range of carefully planned spaces that fit family living and make the most of the knock-out view. **H**



02 Looking back at the house from the front lawn.

03 The double height lounge.



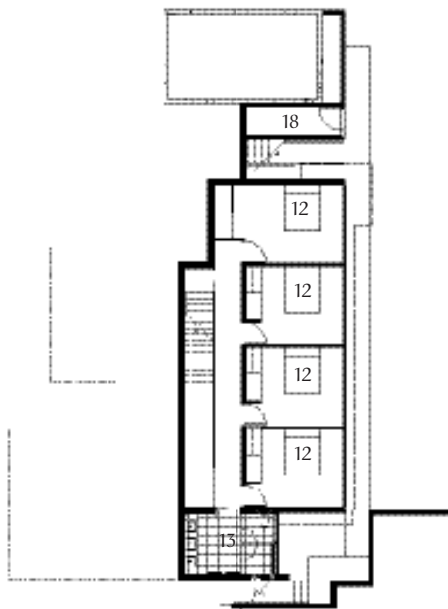
04 Looking at the Harbour Bridge and Auckland city from the main living space.







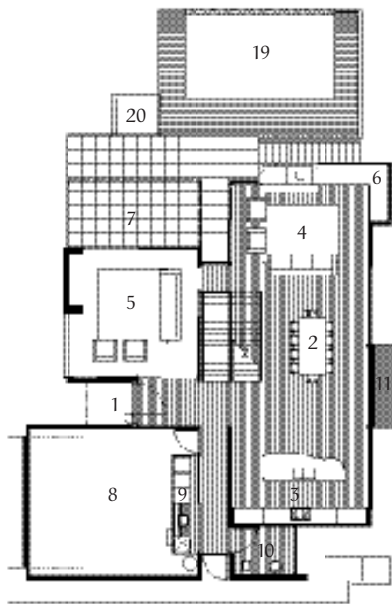
- 05 The dining and kitchen space.
- 06 One of the two living rooms, with a fireplace and window seat.
- 07 The view from the master bedroom.



Ground-floor plan

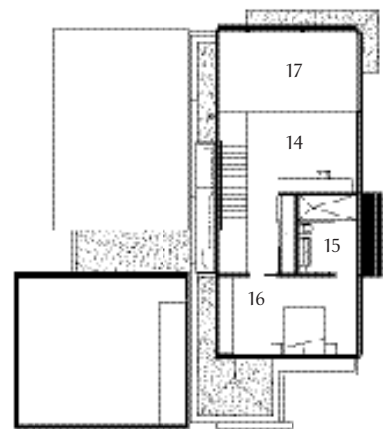


- 1 Entry
- 2 Dining
- 3 Kitchen
- 4 Living
- 5 Family
- 6 Window seat
- 7 Outdoor terrace



First-floor plan

- 8 Garage
- 9 Laundry
- 10 Guest bathroom
- 11 Balcony
- 12 Bedroom
- 13 Bathroom
- 14 Study



Second-floor plan

- 15 Ensuite
- 16 Master bedroom
- 17 Void
- 18 Pool plant room
- 19 Pool
- 20 Spa



08 The tōtara front door – with glass inserts designed by Carin Wilson.

Practice

Crosson Clarke Carnachan Architects

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09 302 0222
www.ccca.co.nz

Practice profile

Crosson Clarke Carnachan Architects constantly strive to understand what is motivating the world around them.

Project team

Paul Clarke; Brent Hore;
Kit Lowe

Consultants

Engineer: Chris Rose,
CMR Engineers

Lighting: Chris Watt,
Aesthetics Lighting Solutions

Builder

Tony Will

Products

External walls: Vertical and horizontal cedar shiplap weatherboard; in-situ concrete

Internal walls: Gib®, in-situ concrete, vertical cedar shiplap weatherboard

Flooring: American oak T&G

Windows and doors: Anodised aluminium joinery

Ceiling: Hoop pine; Gib®

Roofing: Steel and tube Euroline roofing; roofing membrane

Kitchen: Stainlesssteel benchtop, lacquered fibreglass island

Bathroom: Low-iron glass, Duravit basin, mirrored cabinetry, painted Gib® aqualine

Lighting: Aesthetics Lighting Solutions

Time schedule

Design and planning:

12 months

Construction: 18 months

Project areas

Site size: 981m²

Building area: 400m²

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