



## Layers Of Light

Photography  
Brett Boardman

There are big terraces and small ones, two-storey and single-storey. But, basically, they all pose the same problems – small rooms in a railway carriage arrangement, lack of light, no cross-ventilation, a sub-standard rear addition housing kitchen, bathroom and toilet, and a general lack of space.

This single-storey row house in the inner suburb of Camperdown in Sydney was no different. Sam Crawford retained the two separate front rooms as bedrooms, creating a loft in the front one for extra space. The entire rear section was demolished, leaving about 40m<sup>2</sup> to accommodate a living/dining area, kitchen and laundry.

Crawford's overall strategy was to maximise space and create the illusion of more space by bringing as much light as possible into the house which is oriented on a east-west axis. He has exploited the typically narrow hallway by setting up a sequence of expanding spaces, stepping down into the living area, then down again into the kitchen/dining area which is the broadest and has the highest ceiling in the house. This sequence climaxes as the kitchen/dining area merges with the back garden through folding, glazed doors.

The widened kitchen/dining area offered the opportunity for a glazed door and highlight louvered windows looking back through a narrow garden

courtyard to the second bedroom. This, together with a strip skylight down the opposite wall, clerestory windows in the living room, the glazed garden doors and a mirror running the length of the kitchen bench fills the addition with light.

Instead of dividing walls, Crawford has used the joinery and changes of level as room dividers. The bathroom, for example, is separated from the living room by a joinery unit (containing TV, entertainment unit and fireplace on one side and the bathroom vanity on the other) which 'floats' clear of the external wall offering a cheeky glimpse into the bathroom from the living room. The laundry is concealed within the dining room joinery and the kitchen cabinet extends into the living room to become bookshelves.

Crawford has managed to reverse the normal experience of the terrace. Instead of disappearing into darkness, this house now offers the experience of a variety of spaces unfolding into more and more light, plus creating the sense of journey in spite of the actual spatial constraints.

Architect Sam Crawford Architects  
Project Team Sam Crawford, Jolyon Sykes, Cressida Beale  
Builder Andrew Simpson, AS & KB Constructions  
Structural Engineer Tony Russo, Geoff Nirmes Fong & Partners  
Time to Complete Two years (design to construction)

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### Flooring and Paving

The living room uses recycled hardwood flooring. The kitchen has polished concrete from Boralstone. The bathroom uses 100x100mm matt brown tiles from Seca Ceramica. Courtyard concrete pavers from Amber.  
Boralstone (61) 1300 552 555  
Seca Ceramica (61 2) 8399 1244  
Amber (61)1300 361 241

### Walls

Kitchen/living/dining painted in 'Antique White USA' from Dulux. Bathroom in 'Toto' vitreous white tiles from On Dulux (61) 13 25 25  
Onsite (61 2) 9360 3666

### Joinery

Designed by Sam Crawford Architects and built by Euroform Joinery. Dining/laundry has a Blackbutt veneer bench (Blackbutt poly fronts. Kitchen is 2-pak poly. Living/bathroom Queensland Walnut and 2-pak poly.  
Euroform Joinery (61 2) 9558 0285

### Windows and Doors

Paint-finished Western Red cedar from Windoor.  
Windoor (61 2) 9623 2411

