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Geometry is at the forefront in this architect's work, as is the use of timber. A notable addition here is sandblasted concrete, which adds textural focus to vertical surfaces.

Flexible Legacy

location: Bardon, Queensland, Australia | architecture: Shaun Lockyer Architects | interior design: Kalka | photography: Cathy Schusler

A palette of sandblasted concrete, spotted gum timber and natural stone creates a robust, warm and timeless aesthetic in this recently built project on a 4 240-square metre stand, just seven kilometres from the heart of Brisbane. ➤



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There is an influence here from the '70s and '80s – seen in a plethora of timbered surfaces which include the ceilings. However, this is an apt introduction in this family home, which is intended to develop with the occupants.



Tucked away on a large bush stand that combines enviable city views and an acreage lifestyle within the inner city, this house draws its inspiration from modern roots, expressed through the juxtaposition of heavy vertical and light horizontal planes.

Says architect Shaun Lockyer: 'The focal point here is the connection to the land and more specifically, the north-east aspect over the garden, pool and tennis court, all of which enjoy distant city views. The prerequisite was to create an impression that the owners would feel as though they were living in the bush when this is actually the inner city of Brisbane; this narrative underpinned the project.'

'The vacant, sloping stand is of thick bush, where trees needed to be cleared and the land recontoured to utilise the flattest areas of the site. Having achieved this, my brief from the clients was to create a timeless, practical and poetic home.'

'Fortunately, they appreciated our interest in modern architecture and were keen to explore these themes, particularly the elements of materials with a low maintenance aesthetic. The home had to be able to grow with their family needs and engage with the surrounding landscape and environment; spatial flexibility was, therefore, an imperative from the outset.'



'As a result, the planning of the structure was carefully considered for a growing family, with a long-term future in mind. Key ideas centred on simplicity, clarity and a minimalist palette of natural materials to reinforce these values and aspirations.'

While there were no specific problems, the architect recalls that to achieve the right outcome, a significant amount of work was required to be carried out on the site itself. 'The nature of this kind of work is very often controversial when it's underway, but embraced and appreciated once complete. Thankfully, the outcome justified the means and the house now sits

as a testament – in being a sympathetic response to the site.'

In elaborating the brief, the interior signature was justifiably important. The architect continues: 'The clients encouraged the extensive use of concrete and timber from the beginning, wanting a tough and hardwearing home. Its widespread use has been softened by the introduction of grey ironbark and natural stone. These timeless and low maintenance materials were welcomed by the clients and synchronised perfectly with their brief.'

'Our style of architecture has been referred to as



a 'regionally inspired, sub-tropical modernism'. To this end, this house is focused on climate, context and architectural discourse that addresses both people and place. These are values seminal to all of our projects.'

Lockyer used a number of unusual finishes in synch with customised architectural features. He adds: 'An example is the use of sand-blasted concrete, unique to this project for us. While we've used concrete in a number of projects before, it's never been in this format.'

The most vital point of significance for the architects was the location, being nearly 1.5 acres in size, yet only 15 minutes from a major urban centre. Shaun Lockyer saw this as a 'very rare site' affording the luxury of country lifestyle with inner-city convenience. He describes it as: 'A timeless, modern and robust piece of architecture for a family to engage with for their foreseeable future.'



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Access to the exterior is enviable in precluding security necessities. This is enjoyed further on a site which evokes a country ambiance, and yet is in fact only a few kilometres from the city centre.

He adds in summary: 'We had previously worked with these clients on one of our first projects. As their needs changed over time, they decided to purchase this vacant stand and go for round two. We were thus retained again to build their long-term family home on this remarkable site. Very fortunately, and over time, we had developed a close relationship, which created the necessary trust for them to undertake a very challenging project such as this. They enjoy their new home immensely and the daily / seasonal experience of living in it.' h