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A NEW CONNECTION

TEXT *Simon Farrell-Green*
PHOTOGRAPHY *Jackie Meiring*



01



02

Faced with a small, dark 1970s bach across the road from Onetangi, one of Waiheke Island's loveliest beaches, most architects would politely suggest demolishing the existing building and starting again. Instead, Lance and Nicola Herbst of Herbst Architects chose to give a small, tired house an entirely new face.

The problems with the original house – built in the late 1960s or early 1970s on the site of a former general store – were many and manifest. A plywood upper storey with three bedrooms and a too-small living area sat atop a block base with small, pokey rooms and a single-car garage. There was no real outside living space. And there was little relationship between the living areas and the lawn.

The Herbsts were originally brought in to do a small-scale renovation, but wound up completely reworking the entire house. By the time they came on board, the clients had owned the place for close to a year, had done a bit of work off their own bat and got attached to the old girl. "They'd spent a summer there and were kind of invested in it," says Lance. The attachment came with conditions: the clients – a couple with two young children – were adamant that there be three bedrooms upstairs so the whole family was on one floor, which meant living space was going to be at a premium.

The Herbsts suggested building a really big deck that solved all the issues in one fell swoop by becoming a new entry and living area for the house. This deck now stretches along most of the front of the house – giving it, as Lance says, "a new face". The entire thing can be closed off with cedar bi-fold shutters. A front staircase leading to the lawn is demarcated in timber batons that flow through into the rest of the house.

It is perhaps inevitable that very little remains from the home's previous incarnation. The entire top floor was, in effect,

demolished and rebuilt, then wrapped in a cedar rain screen that ties the two levels of the building together. Downstairs, the block base was rendered in plaster, and the rooms opened up to the lawn on both sides with bi-folds, where previously there were windows. The former garage (there's now a discreet carport under the deck) has been turned into a bunk room.

Upstairs, there are three compact bedrooms and two bathrooms. The kitchen runs along the back of the home with a large window that takes in the hills beyond. Above the kitchen, a large roof light runs along the apex of the skillion ceiling and spills light into the kitchen and over the living area. In winter, the family hunkers down in what is a pleasantly snug living room, and in summer they live on the deck, protected from the wind. More than a new face, this house now has a new heart. **H**

PROJECT
Beachfront house

DESIGNER
Lance and Nicola Herbst, Herbst Architects

LOCATION
Waiheke Island

BRIEF
To breathe new life into a 1970s beach house

01—Once a general store, then a 70s bach, the holiday home has been renovated and a new outdoor living area added to the front. **02**—The living, dining and kitchen areas share a single room. In the living area is a 'Togo' sofa by Michel Ducaroy for Ligne Roset from Domo and a 'Cit ' armchair by Jean Prouv  from Matisse. **03**—Natural light floods the kitchen through a large roof light that runs along the apex of the skillion ceiling. 'Octo' pendant lights by Seppo Koho for Secto Design from Simon James Design hang above the bench. **04**—Summer living is focused on the covered deck, with its view and sea breezes.



03



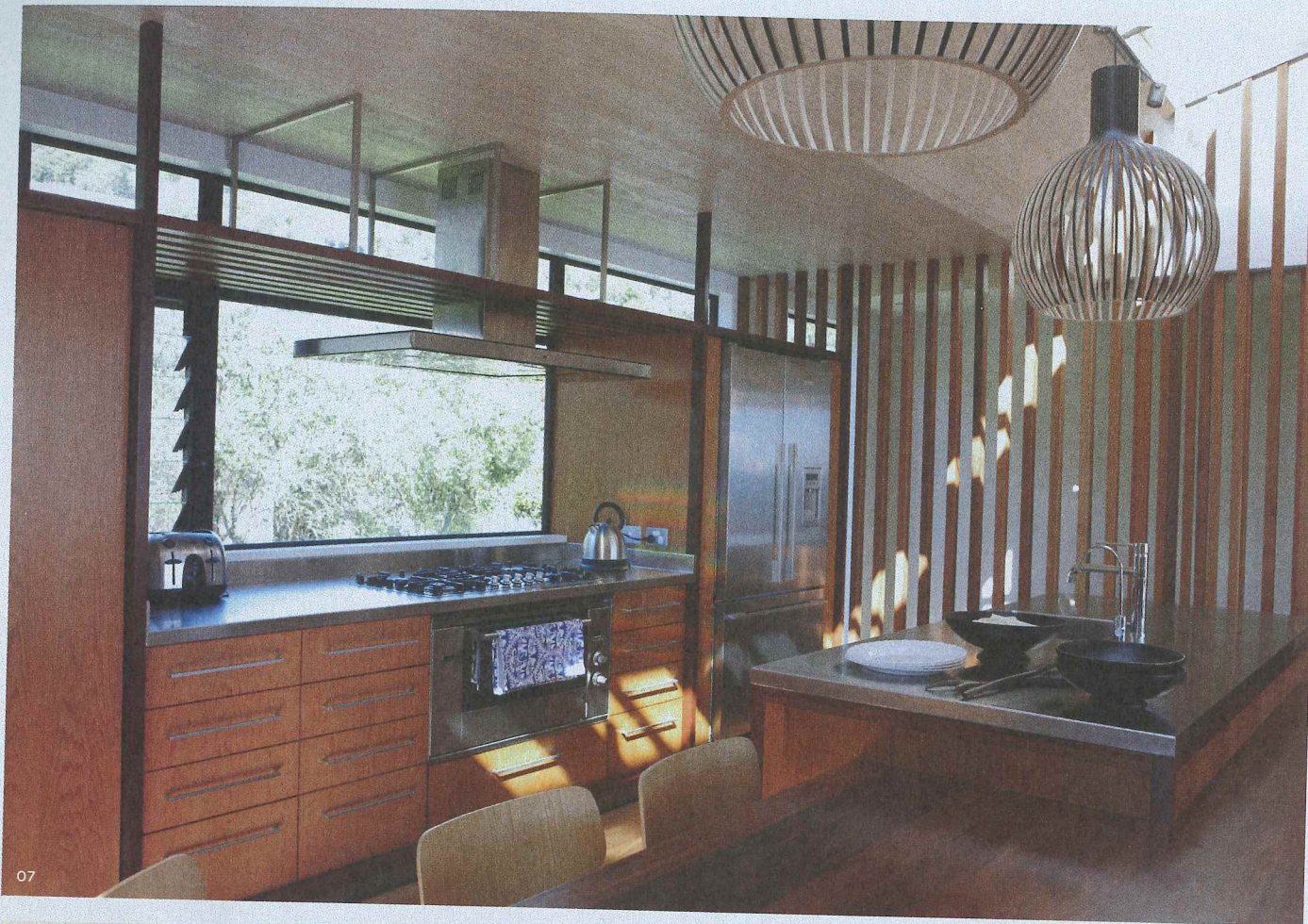
04



05



06



07



08



09

05—The semi-outdoor shower is tucked beneath the deck. 06—The old garage has been transformed into a bunk room, which is lit by a 'Flax' light by David Trubridge. 07—The kitchen window looks out into the back yard. For more information, see our kitchen design section on p.143. 08—In the living room, a custom-designed media cabinet hides the TV from view. 09—The old deck has been replaced with a substantially

larger one for open-air living with a fireplace, and timber shutters to shield against the wind. 10—The old bach, photographed before the renovation commenced. 11—A low gabion basket wall demarcates the driveway from the lawn, which slopes up to the stairs. 12—Timber shutters in the master bedroom give privacy and cross ventilation. The windows and doors are from APL's Metro and Vantage series.



Q&A

NICOLA AND LANCE HERBST
HERBST ARCHITECTS

You've often said that beach houses need a different approach to permanent residences. How so? NH: Beach houses are designed with a different emphasis – they are designed for daily rituals like bathing, eating, making a fire and engaging with nature. For this reason, the covered outside deck becomes the focus of the house. We encourage more modest spaces and the elimination of second living spaces to encourage sharing in these daily rituals. For us, a beach house doesn't want to be a home away from home but a totally different experience – in this way, holiday memories are distinctly different and evocative.

living areas, and the deck was too small for dining or any activities for that matter. We raised the level of the lawn to reduce the height difference between the living deck and garden, and designed a central external stair to facilitate this connection. We replaced the old deck with a substantially bigger deck with covered and open-air areas, with a fireplace and shutters to screen the wind.

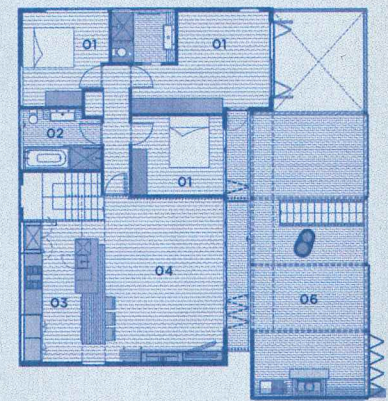
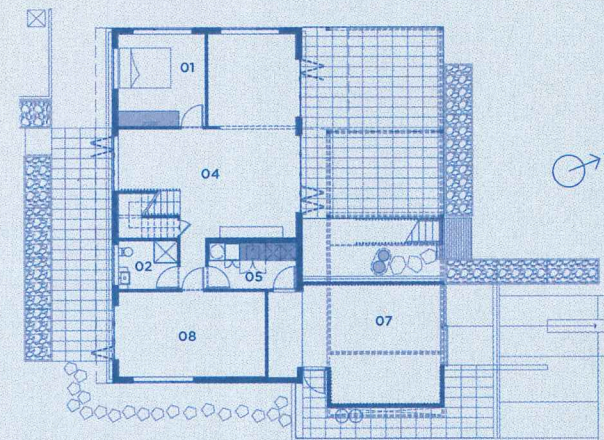
Is it cheaper to renovate than build new? LH: It was a close call as to which costs more. The advantage of a new build is that you get a bespoke solution with a construction that reflects the latest best building practises. Another advantage is that it is possible to quantify the cost of construction before you start building.

This was a renovation. What did the home lack? LH: It lacked a connection between the garden and the first-floor



10

- 01. Bedrooms
- 02. Bathrooms
- 03. Kitchen
- 04. Living
- 05. Laundry
- 06. Covered deck
- 07. Carport
- 08. Bunkroom



11



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