

Project Location
Anglesea, VIC

More frequently holiday homes are becoming little more than transplanted suburban ugliness; the great Australian tradition of the 'shack' is in danger of being superseded by bloated mansions with four bathrooms and all the trappings of modern life.

With this project we set out to celebrate the holiday shack without adopting shack typology and as such we have kept close to the original building's footprint to avoid taking over the rugged coastal block.

Our clients approached us with a brief for 'much more room' for their 'aging' family holiday home. The design response was a series of finely-crafted timber boxes nestled around the existing house.

The Northern addition replaces an old timber deck that previously divided the two storeys and radically reduced sunlight to the living area on the lower level, making the space beneath damp, dark and disconnected from the rest of the house. The trafficable roof of this addition is now extruded down to the earth, creating a 3 metre thick deck and grounding the entire house to the site, while extending the top floor living spaces out into the treetops.

This "thick deck" was then carved out to allow the space within to become habitable play spaces. What could have been a simple suspended deck structure now becomes a multi-dimensioned element, also serving as a roof for the new living/space area below.

The spaces within this timber box to the North can be opened up entirely to the surrounding bush block. Sliding windows above the daybed are concealed within the structure when open & full height glazed doors to the North & West allow sun to penetrate deep into the interior. These extensive openings allow maximum physical and visual interaction between this internal environment and the surrounding bush land, whether views externally from within the space or from the block looking back into the boldly colour filled internal spaces.

The bright red and green finishes at ground level enliven the interior & combined with the outdoor shower, the green mesh walkways and the tennis netting throughout the house allow the dwelling to possess a playful, leisurely and carefree characteristic that a beach/holiday house should embody.

The glazing to the new Northern box addition has been located in such a way as to allow winter sun to penetrate deep within its interior, warming the concrete slab provided for thermal mass & block out the high summer sun.

Other, carefully located, timber boxes appear on the Southern and Eastern edges of the existing structure. The former is a glass roofed & walled shower. Its transparent material, pushing the privacy boundary to create a shower experience immersed in gum trees and sky - something that cannot be easily achieved in the city - reminding the user of the natural beauty of their coastal environment.

To the Eastern side of the house other newly introduced structures nestle under the existing carport providing much needed external storage space and a children's bunk retreat.

A spotted gum deck surrounds the new footprint. The grainy and soft brown tone of this hardwood (also used on the cladding of the structures) allow the additions to melt into the

surrounding eucalypts and tussock grass. It appears as if these additions are reaching out into the landscape, connecting the house to its site. The language of the extension has a distinctive diurnal cycle. Throughout the day, the timber allows the additions to have an appearance that is harmonious with its surroundings, whilst at night the internal lights amplify the bold colour scheme, giving the structure an almost synthetic and rendered image.

Consistent with AMA principles the design demonstrates a necessity for elements to have the ability to perform multiple functions. The day bed serves as a recreational seat, a play platform for the kids, a jungle gym access point out to the trampoline and sandpit, a storage space & (when the large black curtain is extended dividing the area) a private bed.

This flexibility in program is also explored in the joinery design on the landing between the two levels. This plywood element wraps itself along the landing and up the dividing wall, performing as a study table, storage cupboards on the lower level and as a seat and handrail on the higher level.

This multiplicity in function, allows the spaces to have increased versatility, and allows the plan to respond to many different demands simultaneously reducing the overall footprint of the design.

Overall the design produces a multi-generational holiday house. The versatility of the spaces allows them to be inhabited simultaneously by all members of the extended family. The larger open spaces suited to adult entertaining also contain small nooks and areas attractive to younger generations. The design is rigorously addressed at different scales, allowing there to be a certain level of connection and interaction throughout whilst also providing smaller zones, or havens, where solace can be found.