



We love to design financially achievable homes that support healthy, down to earth and mindful lifestyles.

Today's world is facing some serious environmental problems and what a lot of people don't seem to realise is that each of us has the opportunity to make a tiny but significant impact, and the best place to start is at home.

Stop and consider for a moment what it is you and your family need to live a good life that is healthy, meaningful and that doesn't negatively impact on anyone else. You have the opportunity to make a difference for your family, your community and our planet by only using your fair share and giving back in kind.

At Designful, we believe that taking more than what is strictly needed is a privilege that needs to be respected and well considered. We believe that the built environment is holistically intertwined with sustainability economics and the wellbeing of our people and the planet. With this in mind, we challenge our clients to consider exactly "what is enough?"

Achieving sustainability.

Sustainability encompasses a wide range of concepts and extremes which impact on all areas of our lives.

At Designful we take an integrated and holistic approach to the concept of 'sustainability' and prefer to use the phrase 'down to earth' or 'fit for purpose'.

'Fit for purpose' design takes into consideration the financial, lifestyle, emotional and ecological impacts. Striving to find balance between all these elements to arrive at an ideal solution. When all these elements are in balance, we consider the building 'fit for purpose'. We consider a 'down to earth' building as one that is in balance, is enough, is considerate of the planet and its users, and has a long-term future for various uses.

We employ simple, low-tech and balanced ideas to create buildings that meet user needs, minimise the impact on the earth and support a mindful and healthy lifestyle. This looks different for each person and we work with our clients to achieve their ideal balance. We use passive solar design and permaculture principles to design in a holistic way.

Considering the environment.

We believe that the very first and most important consideration is the size of your home. It is important to consider how much space is enough to support your lifestyle. The smaller the footprint of the home, the fewer materials needed, the less energy used, the lower the running costs and the less stuff you can fit in it!

The other main consideration is what your home is built from and how it is put together. We believe that locally sourced, easily produced materials are the best option. We limit our use of materials that travel long distances, are overly expensive and include high levels of plastics or require high energy input to make them. We believe that natural, close to its original state, durable, low maintenance and recyclable materials best achieve a 'fit for purpose' & 'down to earth building'.

In Tasmania, we have a fairly mild climate, thus it is relatively simple to design an energy efficient and comfortable home without adding to the cost in an unrealistic way.

A substantial level of insulation, thermal mass and passive design principles above the 'standard' are needed to create an affordable home that performs well and keeps your family comfortable. We do not need to employ high-tech systems or intensive building models to achieve this.

Considering your lifestyle.

How a home is used will impact greatly on its perceived 'sustainability'. Reasonable supplementary heating, reasonable appliance use, habits, how you travel to and from your building, how you cook and eat, how much stuff you have and how you value it, how you manage waste and your contribution to society can have a substantial impact. Your home needs to support you to live in a mindful way.

We believe that well-being is interrelated with 'sustainability'. Happy, healthy people have a positive impact on those around them and the greater community. Kids and adults that have time outside, have a connection with nature and appreciate what they have will increase their 'good' impact on the earth and those around them.

Considering your budget.

We only want to design buildings that our clients can afford to build. A 'fit for purpose' building should be achievable within a given budget. It is important to get clear on your budget and what can be achieved within it.

At Designful our first task is to make sure your brief will fit comfortably in your budget and if it doesn't, we will work with you to make some compromises and work out priorities to achieve the best balance. Always bear in mind, the larger the home the thinner your budget will spread over its footprint, thus lowering the quality.

We look at building size, complexity of structure and form and level of finish to ascertain a ballpark estimate of construction costs. We use m² rates in a general way to inform how big your home can be for your budget. Our m² rates are derived from builder feedback and real time experience of construction. The building site, complexity of structure, systems and the level of finish all influence the m² rate of a home.

Our initial review of your brief and budget is only ever a 'design' estimation cost and should not be used as a construction budget. Building your own home, customised just for you is a privileged position to be in and it comes with unavoidable risks. You will need to be prepared to invest in thinking and design in order to get pricing and cost indications for your desired building. We cannot guarantee the construction cost of a building and rely on our contractor contacts to provide you with this information.

You will also need to be prepared to invest time and money to sure up expectations and your overall investment. The building process is complex and made up of many individual parts that need to work together to complete the building. Things happen along the way that are unforeseeable, and you need to be prepared for this.

Every decision you make for your building has a knock-on effect, lots of small changes can add up to a big increase in cost. We strive to keep on top of this and inform you of cost management options and decisions throughout the process.

We very much value the builders we work with and appreciate their input into a design, we see the process of design and building a home as a collaboration between client, designer and builder and we like to work as a team. Once you have a team you are comfortable with, stick to that and know that they are investing time and energy into your dream and helping you turn it into a reality.