

MODERN GREEN HOMES Sanctuary

INSIDE ISSUE 39 Winter window ideas; solar access & the law; recycled container cabin; prefab weekender; community energy takes off; 7 Star cottage retrofit; productive garden house; Kiwi bach + more

SHACKS & STUDIOS

SIMPLE, SOLAR AND STAND-ALONE

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PLUS

Design workshop: downsize for retirement
Push the boundaries with fence design
Interior focus: blinds, curtains & shutters

WIN

A hot water heat pump valued up to \$5500

Offer open to Australian and New Zealand residents, details p97

SHACKS

&

Whether they be stand-alone, small footprint or in the backyard, houses under 75 square metres are increasingly appealing to young and old. We visit five fabulous projects that show what's possible with good design and a simple aesthetic.

STUDIOS



Embracing the shack

A backyard studio 'shack' was the ideal way to create more living space without compromising an otherwise perfect Tasmanian home.

WORDS Gabi Mocatta

PHOTOGRAPHY Natalie Mendham

WHEN EDITOR AND WRITER AMANDA

Ducker's family was outgrowing their 1920s Federation bungalow in the genteel suburb of West Hobart, an extension wouldn't do. The family considered an addition, or going up, but they loved their original, history-steeped Tasmanian home and wanted to keep its integrity. Set on a 620-square-metre hillside block, the property had ample room in the backyard – and so the idea of building a small, separate studio was born.

“In Tasmania, there's a very well established shack culture, and we wanted to have one in the backyard,” says Amanda. That meant building small, re-using where possible, and, for Amanda and family, blending the informal 'shack' vernacular with a calm, Scandinavian sensibility. Amanda found Jane Hilliard of Designful in Hobart, a practice that specialises in environmentally sound small builds, and a like-minded partnership began.

“A lot of the brief was about the feel of the place, and how Amanda's family wanted to live in it,” says Jane. Amanda wanted a writing studio and a living space for her eldest daughter, Zia, a university student. There would be a compact bedroom and

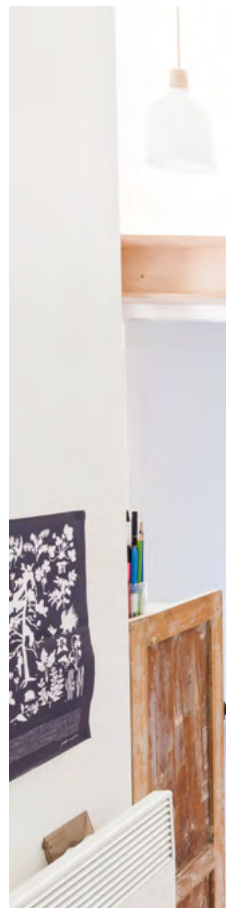
bathroom, a separate study to share, a wide deck, and in keeping with a 'shacky' feel, an outdoor bath. It would also need to be a building that did not cost too much to build or run.

Jane has extensive experience designing compact buildings, and could recognise an opportunity to develop something aesthetically lovely and environmentally sound. “The main thing for me is that if a building is small and simple, and uses a reduced palette of materials, sourced locally, it already has good environmental credentials,” Jane says.

These credentials were added to with copious insulation in the roof, floor, ceiling and walls, to keep the north-orientated studio warm in the cold Tasmanian winters. The building was also designed to specific spans in order to reduce wastage of materials; LED lighting reduces energy consumption. The honey-coloured exterior cladding is plantation timber, and there's a recycled kitchen benchtop in the kitchenette. Amanda's recycled pièce de résistance is the outdoor bath. “I bought it for \$70 off Gumtree, and we have insulated it, so it stays really warm even



The kitchenette joinery is plywood sealed with a low-VOC Cutek finish. Look closely and you'll see a stairway to the loft cleverly integrated into the kitchen shelving. Image far right: The space can be used to store stuff or sleep humans!





The modest floor area of the shack is complemented by a big deck, under-deck storage and an outside bath tucked in behind a privacy screen at one end. For the cladding, raw fibre-cement sheet and radially sawn silvertop ash were chosen. The timber was left raw to minimise maintenance, and will weather to grey.





on a cold night,” she says.

In order to give this 33.5-square-metre space a sense of neatness and order, the studio is big on storage. Attractive marine ply joinery is built along the wall that separates the living space from the work area, and every nook has a use, for example the clever book slots under the floor joists where the studio’s upper level meets the lower level. There is also additional storage space, which can serve as a temporary sleep-out, on a mezzanine level under the high peaked roof.

The studio has just the informal, Danish aesthetic that Amanda was after: natural timber tones, creamy-pale limed

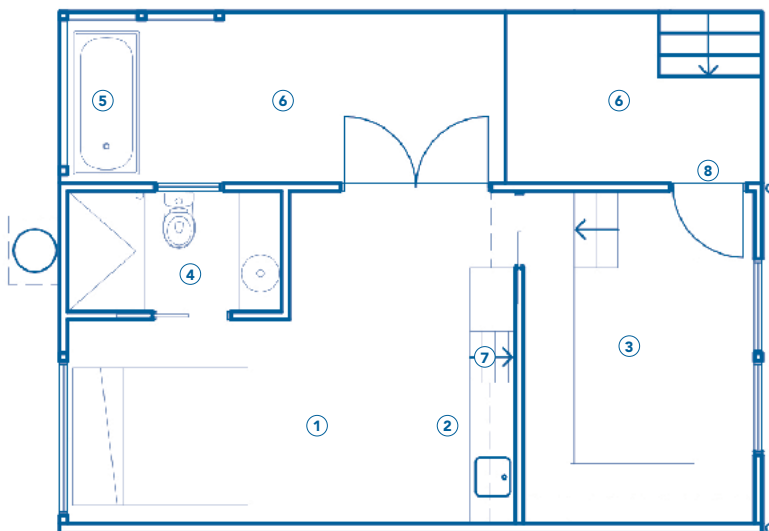


The shack’s clean lines, natural tones and limed ply flooring help achieve the calm, Scandinavian aesthetic that the family desired.

ply flooring, fresh, white walls inside; and outside, attractive grey fibre cement sheeting complemented by timber vertical boards, which will weather to grey. With the French doors open, a long, translucent curtain gently moves in the garden-scented air. “It’s been very successful,” says Amanda. “It’s light, airy and spacious. It feels clean and elegant, but with our vintage and antique furniture, it’s also informal.”

In terms of adding space to the house, the studio has also been a great success: Amanda’s family now has more room to breathe. The studio also functions, as planned, as a mother-daughter creative workspace. And, just occasionally, with family staying and for parties, it also comes into its own. “I think we once had 11 people staying in the house and studio combined,” says Amanda. “It worked just perfectly as a fun shack-at-home.”

FLOOR PLAN



LEGEND

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| ① studio bedroom/living | ⑥ deck |
| ② kitchen | ⑦ stairs to loft integrated in kitchen joinery |
| ③ study with loft over | ⑧ entry |
| ④ bathroom | |
| ⑤ outdoor bath | |



The outdoor bath, acquired for a song on Gumtree, provides a bit of ‘shacky’ luxury. It’s well insulated so it stays warm even on a cool night.





Writer's Studio

—Specifications

Credits

DESIGNER

Jane Hilliard, Designful

BUILDER

Nick Newstead
Constructions

PROJECT TYPE

New build

PROJECT LOCATION

West Hobart, Tasmania

COST

\$140,000

SIZE

Studio 33.5 m²
Deck 12 m²
Land 643 m²
(existing house 150 m²)

BUILDING STAR RATING

6.4 Stars

Sustainable Features

HOT WATER

– Rinnai off-peak 80-litre electric hot water unit.

WATER SAVING

– Fitted with WELS 5-star taps, dual flush toilet and other fittings.

PASSIVE DESIGN

– North orientation to the garden, sufficient glazing in ideal locations for sun and light throughout the day
– Cross ventilation for cooling
– Weather strips to all windows and doors; draught dampers to exhaust vents.

ACTIVE HEATING & COOLING

– Small electric wall panel heater for supplementary heating.

BUILDING MATERIALS

– Structure: Standard timber

framed floor, wall and roof

- Cladding: Silvertop ash, radially sawn, vertical board and batten left raw to weather; Fibre cement sheet, raw
- Internal lining and joinery: Plywood and marine ply from The Bunker
- Insulated with Bradford high-performance Gold insulation, underfloor R2.7, walls R2.7, ceiling and roof total R4.5
- Bradford Thermoseal roof and wall sarking
- Roof: Colorbond custom orb roofing.

LIGHTING

- LED pendant lighting to reduce ceiling penetrations and allow for uninterrupted ceiling insulation; task lighting to reduce fittings.

PAINTS & FINISHES

- Cutek CD50 low VOC seal used for timber throughout.

WINDOWS & GLAZING

- Western red cedar timber windows from Uptons.

OTHER ESD FEATURES

- As it's a secondary dwelling, only a small piece of suburban land is required for effective shared living, while providing privacy for each building
- Space efficient design: ceiling space used for a loft with kitchen joinery doubling as the stair; storage built below and between the rafter space; bath on the deck allows for a small but functional bathroom
- Building makes use of salvaged items such as the deck bath and bathroom fittings.