

Sight improvement

Walls came down and windows repositioned to give this 1970s home a better outlook

Now the major works have finished and the construction dust has settled, Trish has had time to enjoy life in her overhauled house. It's been an opportunity for reflection, which Trish's mother has been happy to fill with feel-good memories. "Mum reminded me the other day that when I was 12, I used to dream about having a property with a creek," Trish says. Trish's childhood dream is now reality, and then some. She and husband David have a 2ha property at Karana Downs with no less than the Brisbane River winding through it. After moving from Morayfield and renting in the area to "get the lie of the land", Trish and David bought the house in 1998. "It wasn't the best house on the street, but to me it was the best location," says Trish, who names the massive Moreton Bay fig dominating

the outlook from the kitchen as one of the selling points of the property. In 2004, the couple decided it was time to look at renovating the house to suit the changing dynamics in their family of four daughters and one son. "People asked us why we wanted to make the house bigger when the kids were leaving the nest, but they're always coming back," Trish says with a laugh, as one daughter, on the brink of finishing university, passes through the kitchen where natural light fills the room despite the miserably overcast day. That light is due to the high-level windows architect Tania Coward included in the designs for the renovation. She thoughtfully positioned the windows where they could be cleaned from the outside by standing on the roof. Despite the wonderful landscape surrounding the house, its original layout was anything but outward looking. Tania changed that by



including more windows and door openings so there would be views from almost anywhere in the house. She also added a new wing, which sits behind the original building, but higher up on the slope of the block. It's positioned there, Tania says, to get the airflow and cooling breezes that come up from the river and over the main house. In this new wing, there's Trish and David's room, two other bedrooms sharing access to a main bathroom, and a home office. A walk-in storage area completes the layout. As well as the major changes to window placement in the original house, Tania also rejuvenated the guest quarters. This self-contained area, which used to be the main bedroom, has an ensuite and kitchenette. In other areas, walls that made vital floor space virtually useless were pulled out. "Where the laundry is now, there used to be a series of alcoves, a bizarre set of little rooms, so I removed the walls to make it one open space," Tania says. She took the same approach in the kitchen-dining area. "The family used to eat meals at a table in a room next door to the kitchen. This room was not in proportion because it had a high ceiling but not the width to balance that height. It felt incredibly narrow." A formal sitting room is separated from the now open-plan kitchen and dining area by a bricked partition in which the sitting room's fireplace is set. "The fireplace is one thing from the original house that I had to keep," says Trish. But the poky rooms and lack of light she was happy to forego.



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