

ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIORS

RCA STUDIO



RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE

2025 CAPABILITY STATEMENT

STUDIO PROFILE



(01)

RCA Studio is a boutique architectural practice designing buildings and interiors with an obsessive attention to detail and client's needs.

We operate through an established design methodology rooted in deep engagement with the project's unique conditions: client aspirations, site characteristics and cultural context, allowing the personalities of residential clients shape the architectural outcomes. Rather than imposing predetermined aesthetics, our process adapts to these relationships, ensuring rigorous attention to material selection, lighting design, detailed craftsmanship, and the orchestration of daily use patterns.

Each design decision builds on strategies to create buildings that work with natural systems, achieving long-term sustainability and enduring spatial quality that deepens over time. The team has decades of combined experience in residential projects, new builds, additions, and renovations alike, including work with heritage buildings. This makes us uniquely equipped to satisfy all of the project's needs, regardless of brief's complexity.

COMPLETED PROJECTS



(01)

RANDOLPH STREET I, HAWTHORN

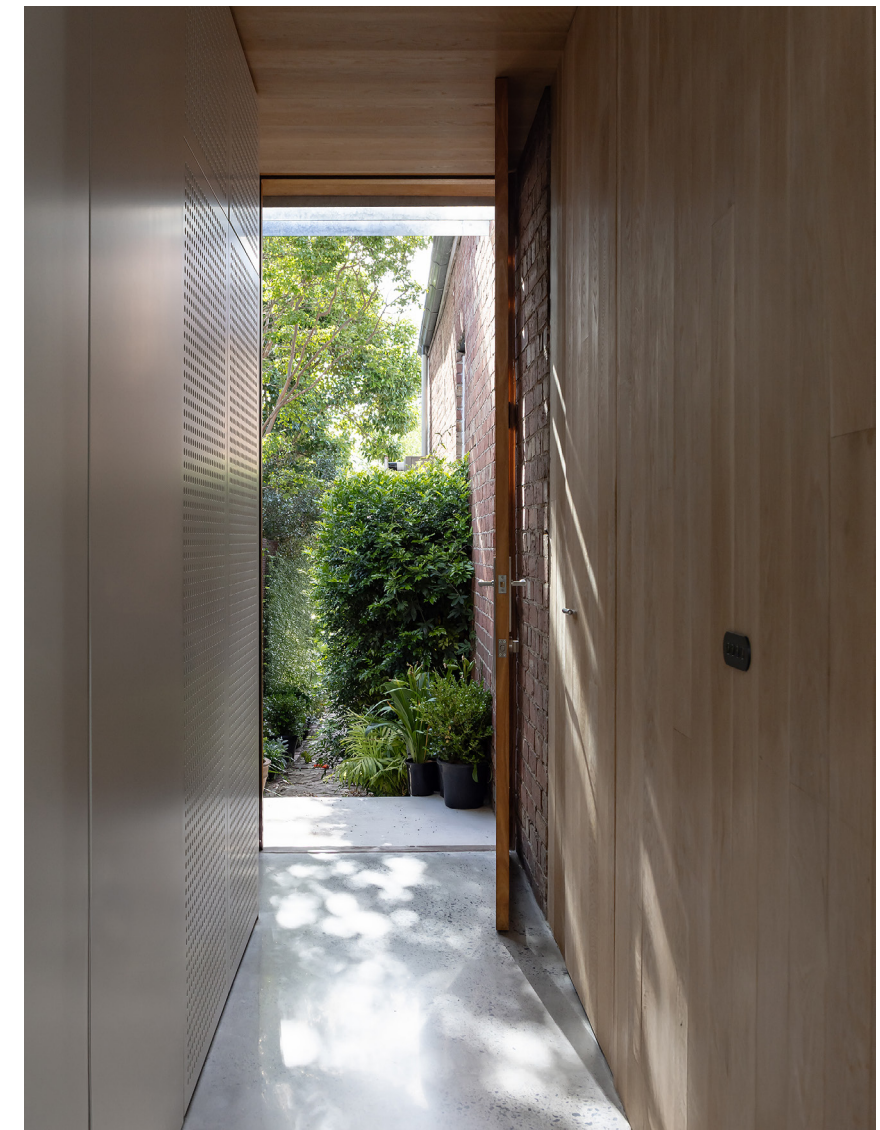
RANDOLPH STREET HOUSE I

This single-fronted Victorian worker's cottage in Melbourne's Hawthorn was transformed into a contemporary family home for architect Tom Carroll and his partner. The renovation retained the heritage facade while completely reimagining the rear with a light-filled open-plan extension.

Key features include floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors connecting to the garden, a galley kitchen and study nook, and exterior steel blades that provide sun control and seating. Mindful of the need for storage in this house typology, the kitchen joinery includes additional built-in functions — at one end of the joinery is a concealed laundry along with generous storage, a fridge and a pantry. The project balances heritage preservation with modern functionality, creating generous spaces filled with natural light on a compact site while incorporating a concrete floor in the new wing with steel embedded in the side walls — allowing for a first level to be added should additional space be required.



(02)



(03)

FIG. (01) BACK FACADE
(02) RETAINED HERITAGE FACADE
(03) SIDE ENTRY



(04)



(05)

FIG. (04) LIVING ROOM
(05) CORRIDOR TO HERITAGE WING



(06)

FIG. (06) STUDY NOOK
(07) KITCHEN



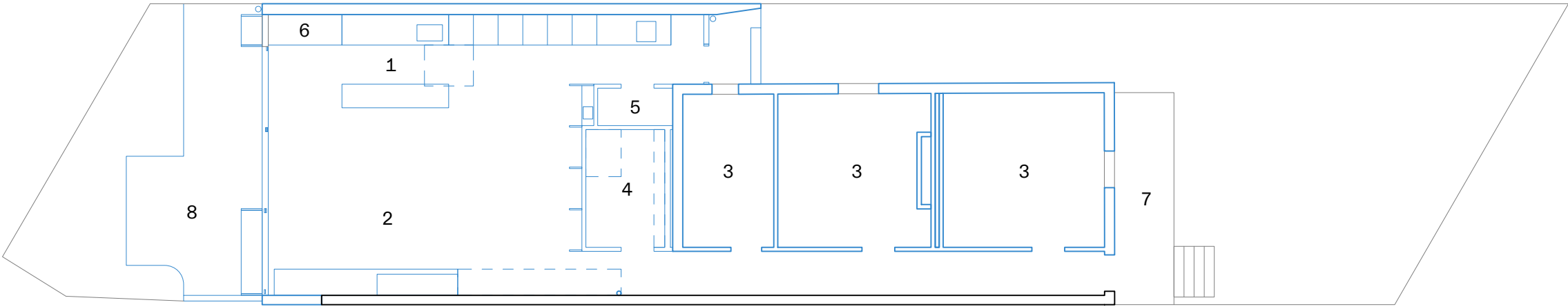
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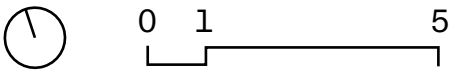


(09)



Ground Floor Plan

1. Kitchen
2. Living
3. Bedroom
4. Bathroom
5. Powder Room
6. Study
7. Verandah
8. Courtyard





(01)

MYRNONG CRESCENT, TOORAK

MYRNONG CRESCENT HOUSE

This heritage art deco house in Toorak's centre was modernized to suit contemporary living while honouring its original legacy. The renovation opened view-lines to the beautiful existing gardens, creating stronger connections with landscape and light throughout the home.

The kitchen was reimagined as a sophisticated hub for cooking and entertainment, with luxurious finishes that set the tone for the entire interior. A restored original curving staircase with black marble treads became the central organizational element, drawing movement between public and private spaces. The heritage and luxury aesthetic extends throughout renovated areas including an ensuite with sauna and styled whiskey room, demonstrating exceptional attention to detail while balancing art deco character with refined modern functionality.



(02)



(03)

FIG. (01) RESTORED CURVED STAIRCASE
(02) HERITAGE ART DECO FACADE
(03) PERGOLA AND OUTDOOR DINING



(04)

FIG. (04) KITCHEN
(05) BENCHTOP DETAIL
(06) ENTRY LOOKING INTO LIVING



(05)



(06)



(07)



(08)



(09)

FIG. (07) MASTER BATHROOM DETAIL
(08) MASTER BATHROOM
(09) MASTER BATHROOM DETAIL



(10)

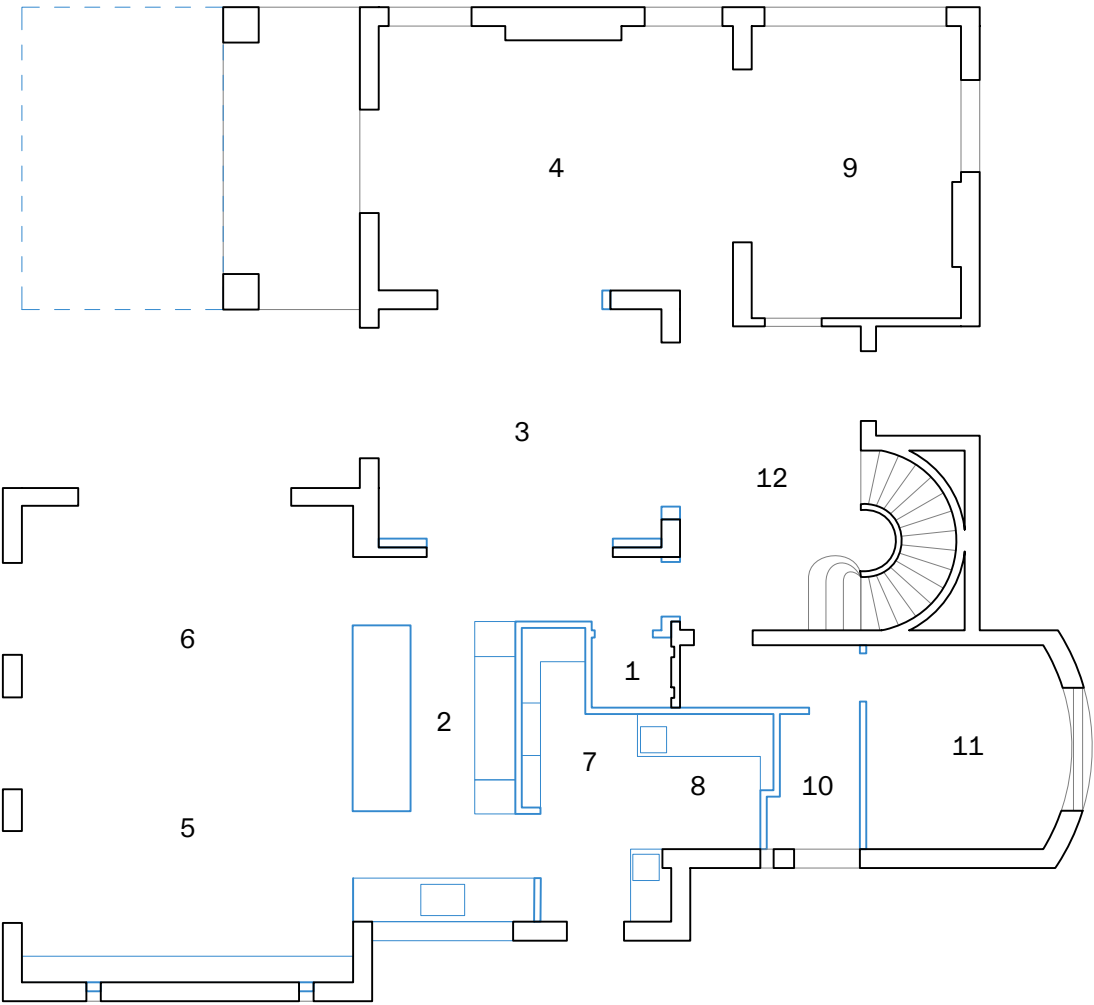


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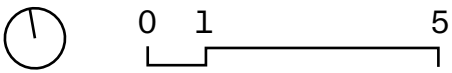
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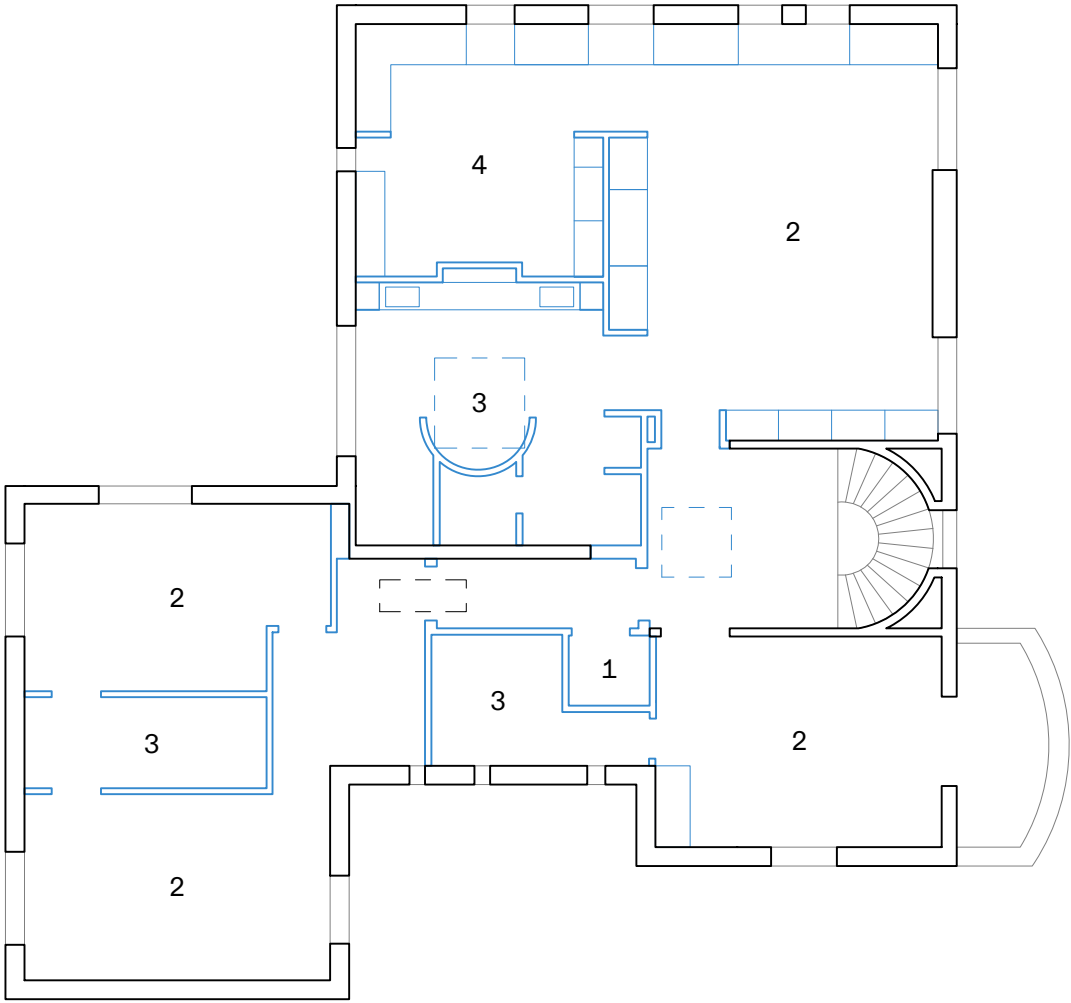
FIG. (10) MASTER BEDROOM
(11) WALK-IN CLOSET AND SHOE ROOM
(12) MASTER BEDROOM JOINERY
(13) GROUND FLOOR PLAN
(14) FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Ground Floor Plan

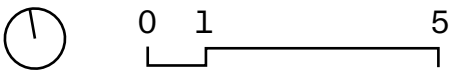
- | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1. Lift | 5. Family | 9. Lounge Bar |
| 2. Kitchen | 6. Meals | 10. Powder Room |
| 3. Dining | 7. Pantry | 11. Study |
| 4. Living | 8. Laundry | 12. Entry |





First Floor Plan

1. Lift
2. Bedroom
3. Bathroom
4. Closet





(01)

CANNING STREET, CARLTON

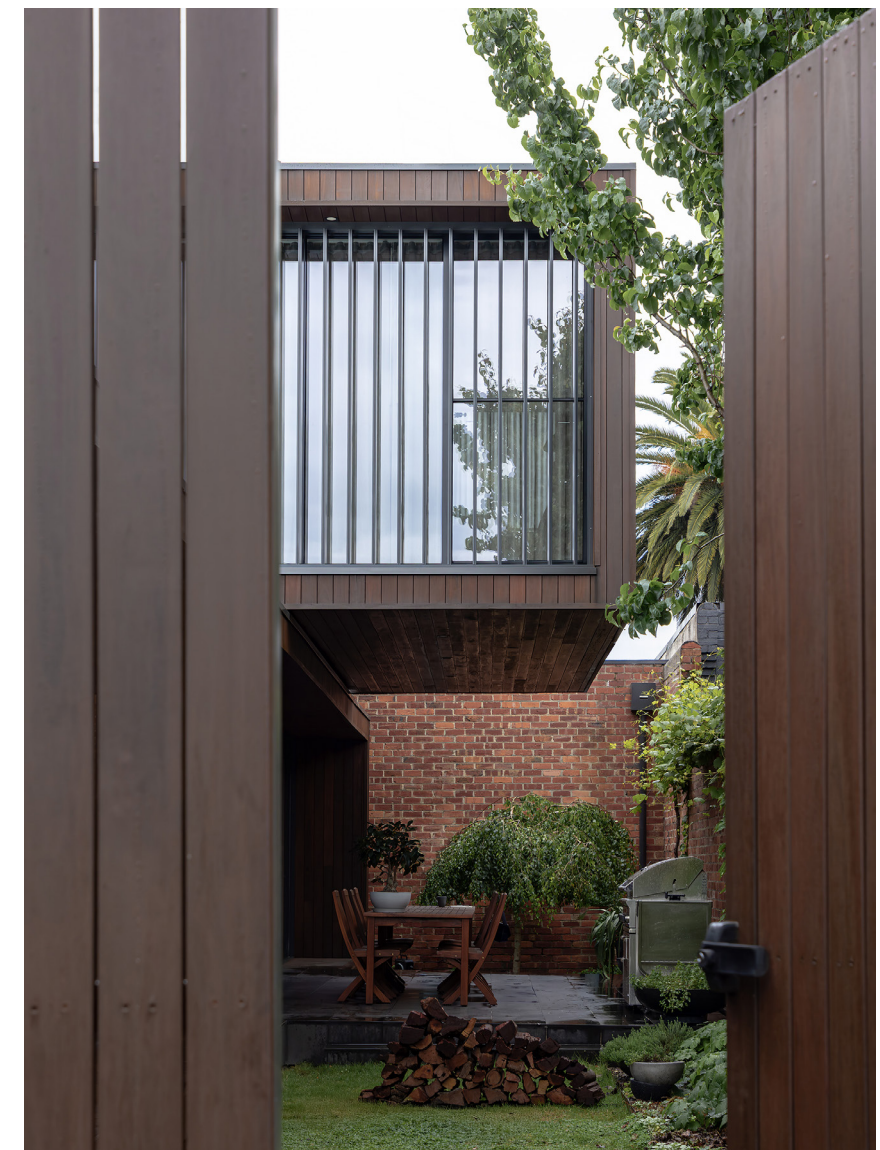
CANNING STREET HOUSE

This project combined two Victorian townhouses in Carlton, demolishing 1950s and 1970s additions while restoring the original heritage street front and adding a contemporary rear extension. The design was organized around the owners' culinary passion, with the kitchen serving as the central axis where a new first-floor addition twists from east-west to north-south orientation. This twist allows the extension to overhang the garden, creating a shaded courtyard while maximizing northern light penetration.

The sustainable approach saw all demolition bricks hand-cleaned and recycled by the clients for reuse in new construction. Historic perimeter walls were preserved to maintain layers of the building's evolution over time. The garden opens directly onto the back laneway, extending the streetscape and supporting the owners' active social life, creating a rich space where community, food culture, and historical respect converge.



(02)



(03)

FIG. (01) DECK LOOKING INTO LIVING
(02) RESTORED HERITAGE TERRACES
(03) COURTYARD VIEW FROM LANEWAY



(04)



(05)



(06)

FIG. (04) COURTYARD
(05) GARDEN OPENING INTO THE LANEWAY
(06) OUTDOOR DINING AND KITCHEN



(07)



(08)



(09)

FIG. (07) OUTDOOR DINING AND BEDROOM ABOVE
(08) OUTDOOR DINING
(09) VIEW INTO COURTYARD



(10)



(11)

FIG. (10) DINING AND KITCHEN
(11) DINING AND KITCHEN
(12) KITCHEN



(12)



(13)

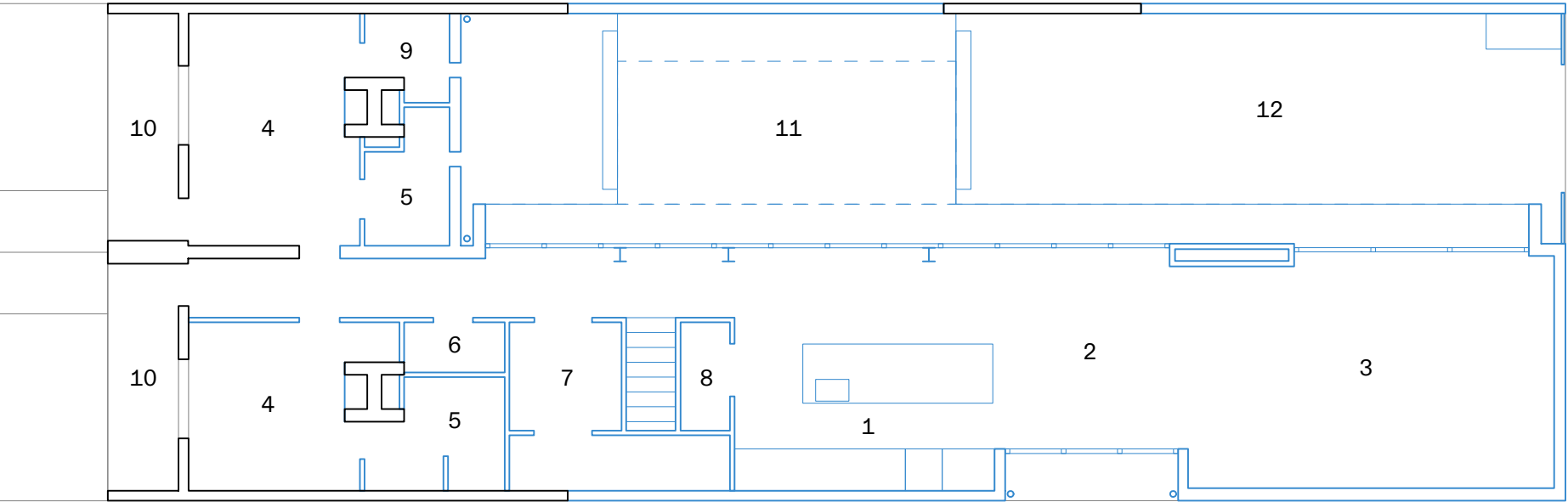


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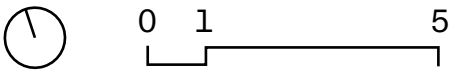
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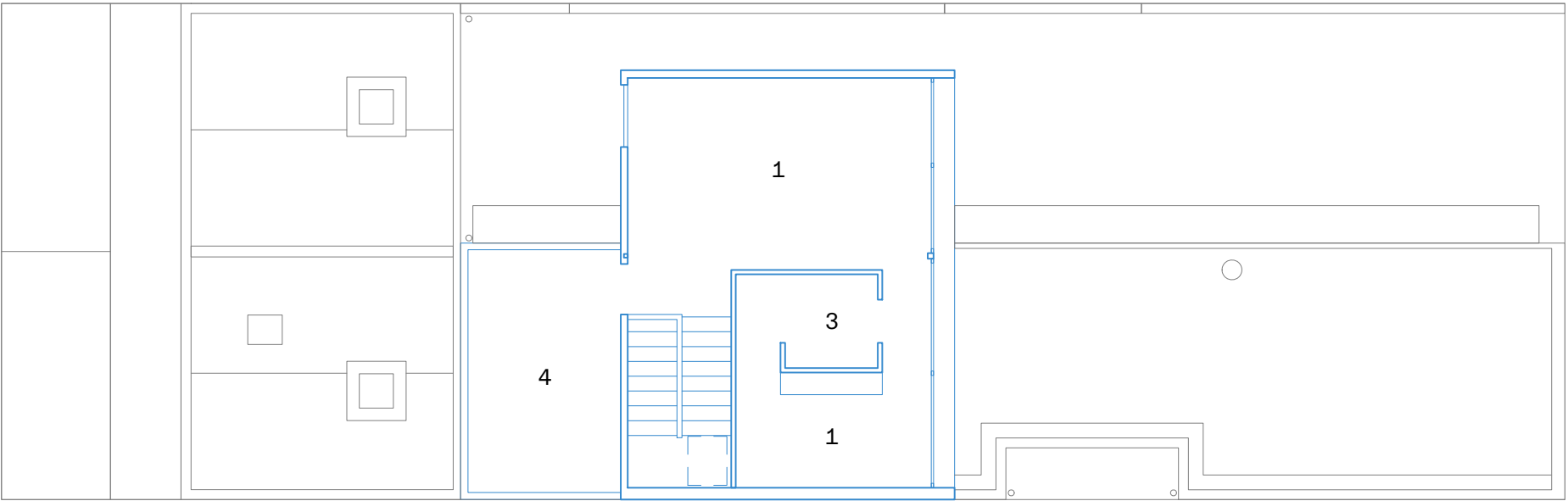
FIG. (13) LIVING ROOM
(14) MASTER BATHROOM
(15) BEDROOM AND TERRACE
(16) GROUND FLOOR PLAN
(17) FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Ground Floor Plan

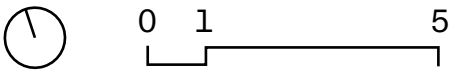
- | | | |
|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Kitchen | 5. Bathroom | 9. Closet |
| 2. Dining | 6. Powder Room | 10. Verandah |
| 3. Living | 7. Laundry | 11. Outdoor Dining |
| 4. Bedroom | 8. Pantry | 12. Courtyard |





First Floor Plan

- 1. Bedroom
- 2. Bathroom
- 3. Closet
- 4. Terrace





(01)

COLLEGE STREET, HAWTHORN

COLLEGE STREET HOUSE

This Victorian cottage in Hawthorn had been stripped of period detailing through successive renovations, leaving simple rooms flanking a central corridor to a sizeable rear garden. The transformation for a young family concealed a substantial two-storey addition behind the original pitched roof, taking advantage of the northern rear elevation.

The contemporary wing features open-plan kitchen, dining and living areas articulated by double-height voids that draw light through celestial windows. Two stone benches anchor the spaces—one main kitchen bench and an indoor-outdoor bench that straddles the boundary when glass doors open to garden and plunge pool. The material palette of Alma stone, timber joinery, and Venetian plaster creates a sense of being carved in situ, while the rear elevation's crisp white lines and deep eaves provide contemporary sun protection.



(02)



(03)

FIG. (01) BACK FACADE
(02) HERITAGE FRONT FACADE
(03) FAMILY ROOM



(04)



(05)

FIG. (04) FAMILY ROOM
(05) KITCHEN AND DINING
(06) KITCHEN VIEWED FROM COURTYARD



(06)



(01)

LITTLE WELLINGTON STREET, COLLINGWOOD

LITTLE WELLINGTON STREET SAUNA

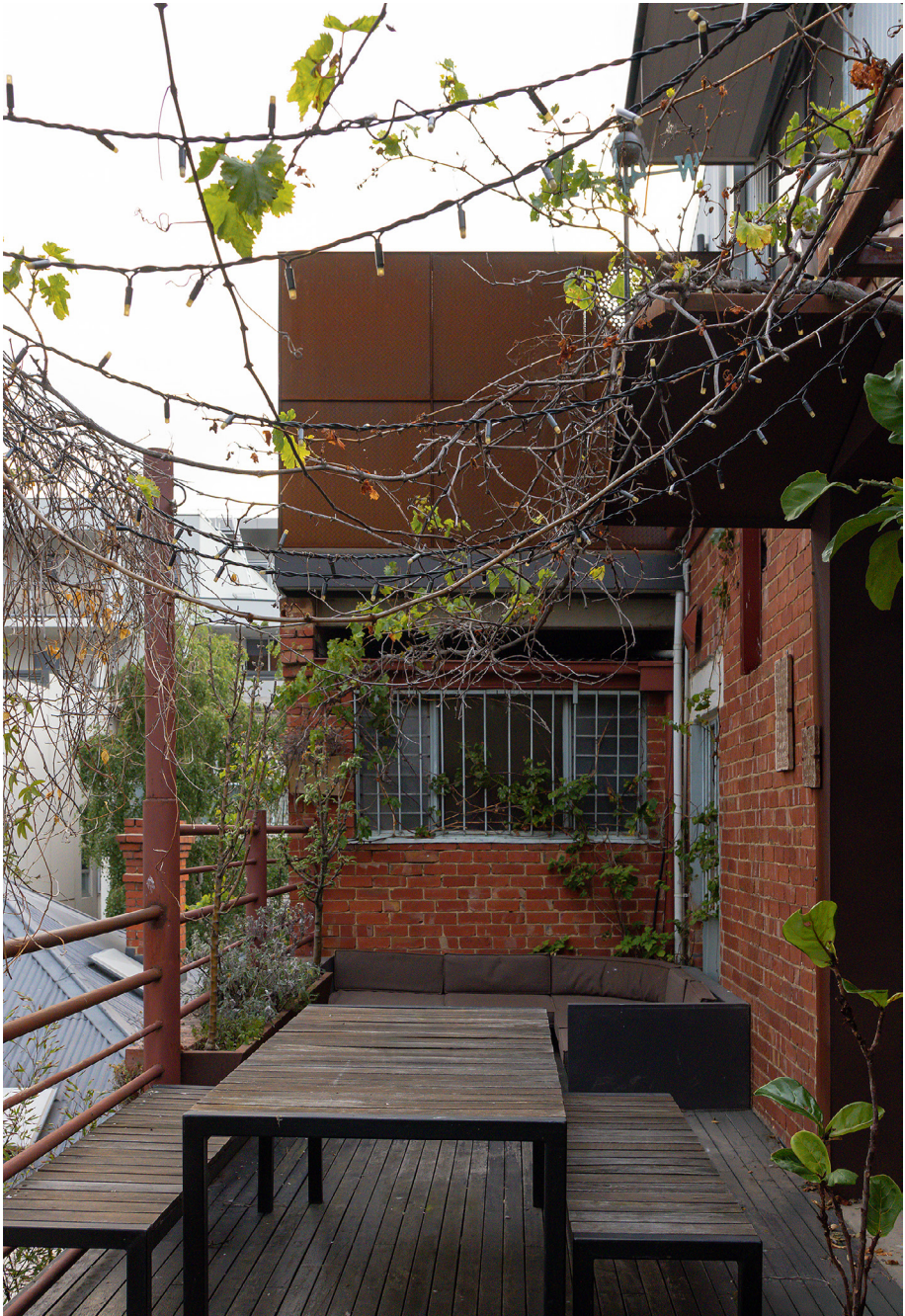
Within the old industrial neighbourhood of Collingwood, this project focused on a new sauna addition to a roof terrace of a warehouse renovated home. The client has a strong appreciation to contemporary art and has multiple art pieces commissioned specifically to be positioned at their selected locations around the home.

The client wanted to treat this new sauna addition as an art installation to top this very industrial looking home. With this in mind, we selected materials that compliment the character of the existing structure, as well as of the surrounding neighbourhood of Collingwood. The main materials are corten steel used both solid plate and mesh forms, following a regular pattern to enclose the also sculptural drum shaped sauna. The mesh and solid plates were strategically positioned to manage the levels of privacy and openness specified by the client.

FIG. (01) CORTEN ADDITION FROM LT WELLINGTON ST
(02) CORTEN ADDITION FROM NAPOLEON ST



(02)



(03)



(04)

FIG. (03) ADDITION VIEWED FROM DECK
(04) INTERNAL VIEW AND ART
(05) BARREL SAUNA



(05)



(01)

STATION STREET, CARLTON

STATION STREET PERGOLA

Our project transformed an existing terrace home, updating the kitchen, bathroom, and second story. The focus of the design, however, is a new outdoor pergola. This creates an outdoor room for entertaining while also providing essential shade from the harsh afternoon sun. The playful timber battens offer a light contrast to the solid masonry buildings of the surrounding laneway.



FIG. (01) COURTYARD
(02) DETAIL
(03) PERGOLA

(02)

(03)

PROJECTS IN PROGRESS



(01)

GLENLYON ROAD, BRUNSWICK EAST

GLENLYON ROAD HOUSE

This courtyard house responds to a main arterial road frontage and rear vehicle access by organizing around a central private courtyard, with smaller courtyards creating varying degrees of privacy throughout. The design celebrates the clients' love of native Australian landscapes through seamless integration of architecture and gardens, expressed in both soft landscaping and natural material finishes.

A timber workshop bookends the main living space, creating an active hub for their craft practice. Sustainability drives the design through comprehensive passive strategies: productive gardens, optimal north orientation, brise-soleil systems admitting winter sun while excluding summer heat, thermal mass, recycled brick, external shading, and enhanced wall insulation, complemented by photovoltaic panels, water harvesting, and battery storage. Good design should weave these principles seamlessly, creating a home that is timeless and highly efficient.



FIG. (01) CENTRAL COURTYARD AND LIVING
(02) CENTRAL COURTYARD

(02)



(03)



(04)



(05)

FIG. (03) ROAD-FACING FACADE
(04) CENTRAL COURTYARD VIEWED FROM LIVING
(05) FRONT COURTYARD, ENTRY AND DINING



(01)

ADENEY AVENUE, KEW

ADENEY AVENUE HOUSE

This residential project comprised a comprehensive renovation and extension for a young family, with a strong focus on communal living and quality design. The reimagined home offers a series of flexible spaces that can adapt to the family's evolving needs over time as they age.

A natural material palette extends the character of the original house, with brick and timber complemented by contemporary elements such as steel plate and aluminium. This blend creates a seamless yet distinct transition from the heritage fabric into the new, light-filled contemporary extension.



FIG. (01) ADDITION VIEWED FROM GARDEN
(02) LIVING ROOM

(02)



(03)



(04)

FIG. (03) EXISTING HOUSE AND EXTENSION
(04) FAMILY ROOM LOOKING INTO INTERNAL COURTYARD
(05) INTERNAL COURTYARD



(05)



(06)



(07)

FIG. (06) KITCHEN AND DINING
(07) LIVING ROOM FROM KITCHEN
(08) MASTER BEDROOM



(08)



(01)

BALSTON STREET, BALACLAVA

BALSTON STREET HOUSE

Drawing inspiration from our clients' grandfather an Australian modernist architect, we designed this project by reinterpreting his era's fundamental design principles. The heritage-listed dilapidated cottage, one of the oldest in the Port Phillip Council, presented unique challenges particularly with its low ceilings. Our solution was to add a new studio and garage at the rear, which frames the backyard and creates a central family courtyard. The main bedroom occupies the beautifully restored ground floor of the original cottage to the front, with the children's rooms located on the new second story. We proposed an unconventional side entry to maximize the narrow cottage's floor plan, guiding guests further into the home for a more impactful and personal greeting.



FIG. (01) STAIR DETAIL
(02) LIVING ROOM OPENING INTO THE GARDEN

(02)



(03)



(04)



(05)

FIG. (03) KITCHEN AND DINING
(04) CIRCULATION SPACE
(05) GARDEN VIEW FROM KITCHEN



(01)

PINCHGUT LANE, MOLDEN

PINCHGUT LANE HOUSE

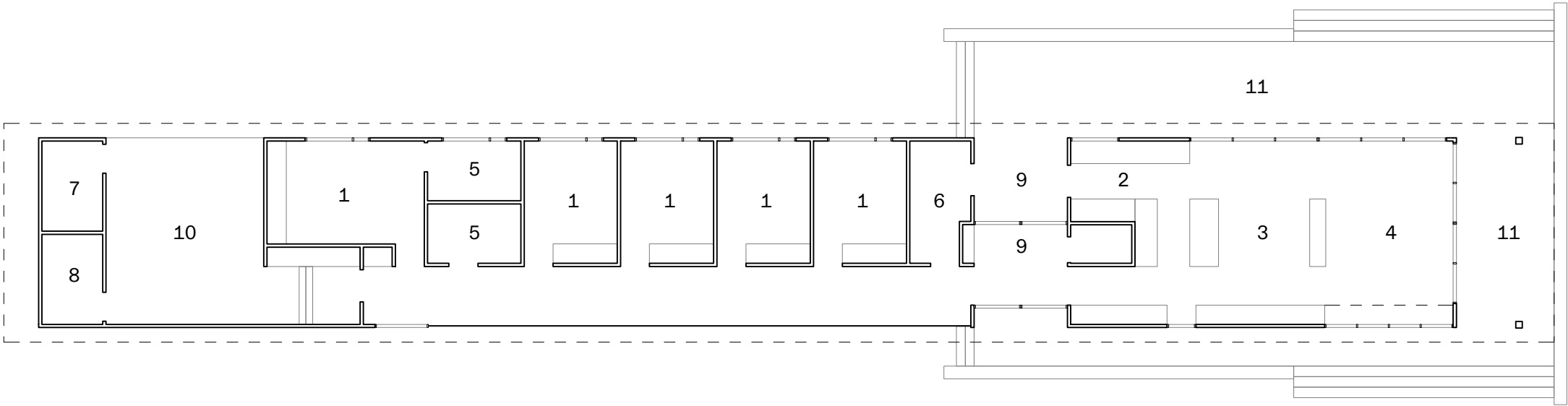
Pinchgut Lane was conceived as a simple, linear arrangement, with all bedrooms and living spaces oriented to the north to capture optimal sunlight and views of the surrounding creek. This configuration also turns the home’s back towards the street, ensuring privacy for its occupants. The elongated form helps to shelter the garden areas, providing a sense of enclosure within the openness of the surrounding landscape.

Perched atop a rolling hill, the house offers expansive countryside vistas from its terraces, allowing occupants to take in the panorama from an elevated vantage point. Its architectural language draws inspiration from the traditional Australian shack typology, reinterpreted for a larger family home. The materials, compact footprint, and roof form pay homage to the shack’s simplicity, while the design seamlessly integrates into the landscape, creating a relaxed retreat for family life and enjoyment.

FIG. (01) VIEW FROM CREEK
(02) VIEW FROM ROAD
(03) GROUND FLOOR PLAN
(04) SITE PLAN



(02)



Ground Floor Plan

1. Bedroom

2. Kitchen

3. Dining

4. Living
5. Bathroom

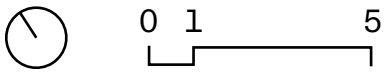
6. Laundry

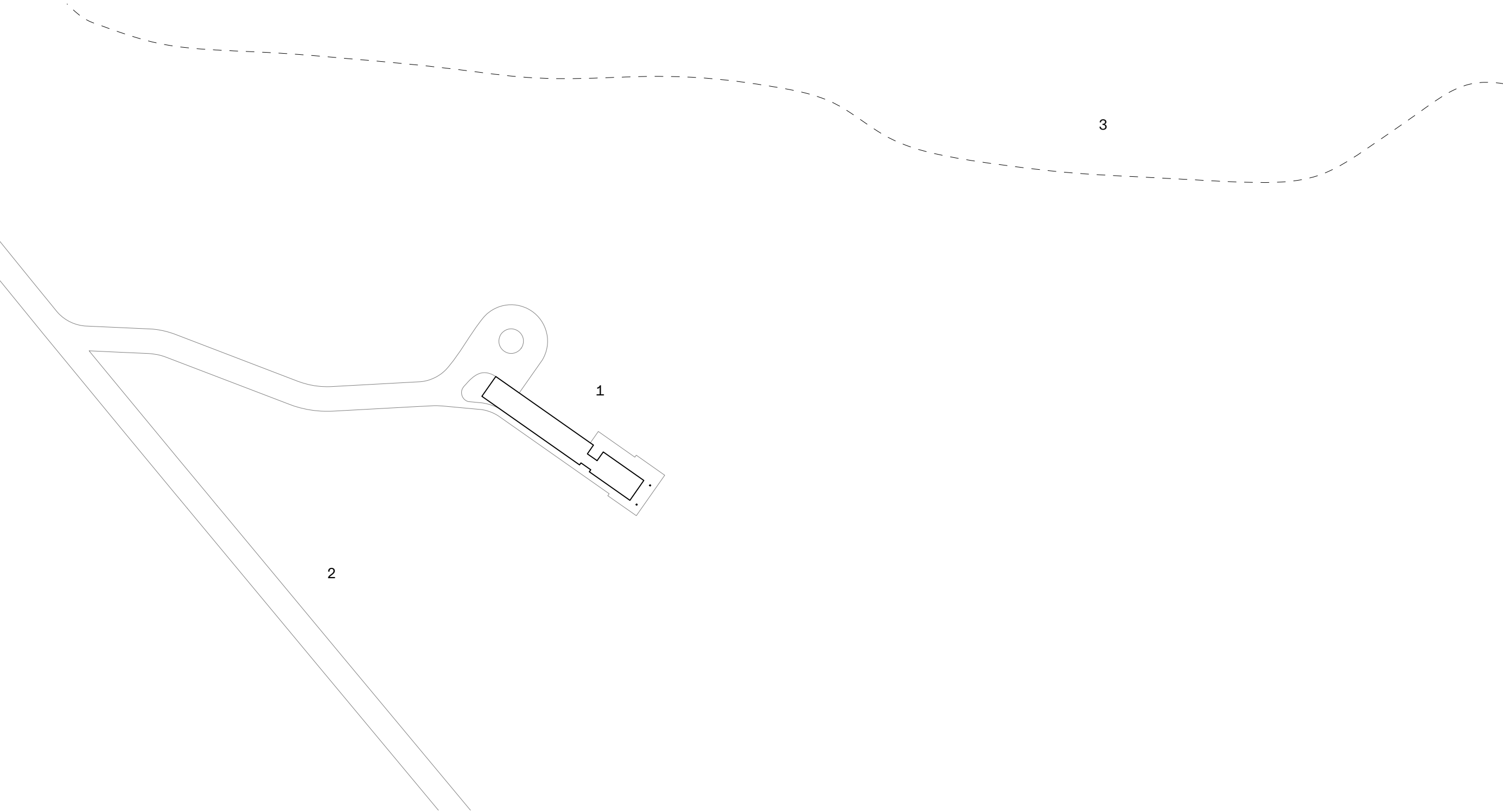
7. Storage

8. Battery
9. Mudroom

10. Garage

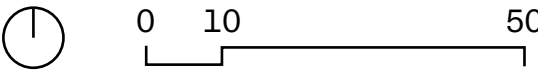
11. Deck





Site Plan

- 1. Residence
- 2. Road
- 3. Creek





(01)

DENHAM STREET, HAWTHORN

DENHAM STREET HOUSE

This project involved a substantial renovation of a significant Federation home in Hawthorn. The family, moving from a smaller house, needed a design that could balance the grand scale of the heritage home with a vibrant connection to the outdoors.

The new rear addition extends from the original house with a continuous flow. A linear skylight divides and defines the living spaces, creating a sense of intimacy while preserving the feeling of a single, large volume. The contemporary addition contrasts the original double-brick structure. It wraps around the garden spaces, using a linear brick to emphasize the horizontal above slimline glazing. An off-form concrete colonnade provides a sense of solidity and depth to the dining room, creating a perfect balance of old and new. The home achieves a classic yet contemporary feel, perfectly suited for family life, complete with a dedicated wine room tucked at the end of the dining area's vaulted ceiling for a touch of sophisticated luxury.

FIG. (01) POOL AND OUTDOOR DINING
(02) FAMILY, DINING AND WINE ROOM



(02)



(03)



(04)

FIG. (03) VIEW FROM COURTYARD
(04) LIVING ROOM



(05)



(06)

FIG. (05) KITCHEN AND PANTRY
(06) LIVING ROOM FROM KITCHEN
(07) KITCHEN



(07)



(08)

FIG. (08) STAIR DETAIL
(09) CIRCULATION



(09)



(10)



(11)

FIG. (10) RESTORED HERITAGE BEDROOM
(11) MASTER BATHROOM



(01)

TANNER GROVE, NORTHCOTE

TANNER GROVE HOUSE

A new rear extension to this Californian bungalow creates a central lightwell and courtyard, along with a striking feature staircase that leads to a new first floor. The upstairs area now houses the children's bedrooms and a dedicated play space. The ground floor was also redesigned to create a seamless connection between the living, kitchen, and laundry areas and the exterior. A crazy-paving pathway guides you from the house to the outdoor entertaining space and pool house.



FIG. (01) INTERNAL COURTYARD, LIVING
(02) BACK FACADE FROM GARDEN

(02)



(03)

FIG. (03) MASTER BEDROOM
(04) LIVING, DINING AND KITCHEN



(04)



(01)

MOTHERWELL STREET, SOUTH YARRA

MOTHERWELL STREET HOUSE

The design for this new addition to a Victorian house reflects the existing home's clear and simple geometry. A series of interconnected spaces, linked both vertically and horizontally, utilise a central courtyard and staircase to create a seamless flow. The new structure carefully balances the need for natural light with wall space to accommodate the art collector's requirements.



FIG. (01) BACK FACADE FROM COURTYARD
(02) CENTRAL COURTYARD

(02)



(03)



(04)



(05)

FIG. (03) COURTYARD VIEW FROM LIVING AND KITCHEN
(04) SEATING NEXT TO LANEWAY ENTRY
(05) CIRCULATION SPACE



(06)



(07)



(08)

FIG. (06) STAIRCASE WHITE CARD
(07) INTERNAL COURTYARD AND CIRCULATION WHITE CARD
(08) KITCHEN WHITE CARD

STUDIO TEAM

DIRECTORS

NELSON RIOFRIO is a founding Director of RCA Studio with over 18 years of experience across Architecture, Master Planning and Interior Design, with international qualifications from universities in Mexico, Spain, Australia, Ecuador, Japan and the United Kingdom. As Project Design and Delivery Lead, Nelson manages all phases of residential projects from concept to completion, ensuring design intent is maintained throughout the documentation and construction process. His international perspective and award-winning project experience brings a sophisticated approach to residential design, from intimate renovations to multi-residential developments.

TOM CARROLL is a founding Director of RCA Studio and registered architect with extensive experience leading award-winning residential projects across varying scales and typologies. As Overall Design Lead, Tom directs the design strategy and coordinates multidisciplinary teams to deliver bold and timeless residential outcomes from concept to completion. His pragmatic approach to client coordination and proven ability to manage complex residential renovations, extensions and new builds ensures seamless project delivery while maintaining strong design focus for residential clients.

TEAM

MADISON HORTH is a Graduate Architect with a Master of Architecture from Monash University and proven experience leading and managing incredibly complex commercial projects. Her passion for design and attention to detail integrates architecture, interiors and landscape to elevate user experience in residential projects.

GERONIMO IRUSTA is a Graduate Architect and Documentation Lead who completed both Bachelor and Master degrees in Architectural Studies with first-class honours at Queensland University of Technology. His multicultural background from Ecuador, Argentina and Australia brings valuable perspective to residential documentation and design.

ANDRES ALVAREZ is an Architectural Assistant with over 7 years of experience in residential, commercial and institutional projects. His proven ability to manage projects from inception to completion ensures adherence to building codes and sustainability standards.

IVANNA ARCE is an Architect and Documentation Lead who specializes in creating detailed residential plans using Revit and BIM modelling. Her strong knowledge of building codes and construction techniques ensures high-quality residential documentation.

TEAM

TAISIYA SPIRINA is a Graduate Architect with a Master of Architecture from the University of Melbourne, and a decade of experience in visual design. She creates architectural visualisation, translating residential design concepts into compelling visual representations.

JOSHUA RAFTER is currently pursuing his Master of Architecture at the University of Melbourne and works part-time with RCA Studio on residential and commercial projects.

EDWINA RUSH is a Landscape Designer who frequently collaborates with RCA Studio on residential projects throughout Melbourne. Her extensive experience in garden design ensures seamless connections between architecture and natural environments.

RECOGNITION

RECOGNITION

- 2024 THE LOCAL PROJECT: Randolph House Project Feature
- 2024 HABITUS LIVING: A Very Personal Labour of Love, Randolph House by (and for) RCA Studio
- 2024 HOUSES AWARDS SHORTLIST: House Alteration and Addition under 200m2: Randolph House I
- 2023 BOROONDARA URBAN DESIGN AWARDS: Certificate of Commendation: Best Heritage Extensions, Additions and Alterations
- 2023 BROADSHEET: Babajan Project Feature
- 2022 ARCHDAILY: Canning Street House Feature
- 2022 AUSTRALIAN DESIGN REVIEW: RCA Studio Brings Consistency to Century-old Art Deco Home
- 2022 AUSTRALIAN HOUSE & GARDEN: Two Become One, Canning Street House Feature

RECOGNITION

- 2022 ARCHILOVERS: Best Project of 2022, Myrnong Crescent House
- 2022 DWELL: 19 of the Best Aussie Mullet Renovations That Turn Things Up in the Back
- 2022 THE DESIGN WRITER: Double Terrace, with Recycled Brick by RCA Studio
- 2022 GOOD FOOD: Babajan Opens Second Store in Melbourne's CBD for Middle Eastern To-go
- 2022 TIMEOUT: Babajan opens on Little Collins Street
- 2021 DWELL: This Melbourne Mullet Renovation Is a Mood—and It Starts in the Kitchen
- 2021 HABITUS LIVING: A Home With a Kitchen at Its Heart
- 2020 DOMUS: Canning Street House Project Feature

CONTACT DETAILS

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THANK YOU