

## Layers of history were unravelled, revealing surprises.



**T**his 1930s house in Gaythorne, in Brisbane's north-west, was heavily disguised in asbestos cladding when its owners first saw it. Many parts were badly affected by water rot, and various home handyman incursions were crumbling and unsightly. As architect Paul Butterworth notes, "It would probably have been easier to demolish it, but the owners were brave."

Verandahs had been enclosed and rooms painted in a "ghastly array" of pink, blue and yellow. Butterworth and his clients set about unravelling the layers and revealing the home's history, leaving the nice surprises revealed and expressed to add texture to the final picture.

Butterworth has re-interpreted older aspects of the house in a new context, while re-using existing doors and VJ boards. The house was lifted 600mm so it could be built in underneath. The kitchen, originally in the centre of the house, was repositioned to a breezy lookout spot near the front door. The central hallway was widened into a room big enough to live in, with views to the front and back and generous ventilation. A glorious poinciana tree takes up some of the large (1000 sqm) yard, and is a point of focus through the living room louvres.

A skylight above the kitchen bench illuminates the workspace, while the front door and stairs have been reconfigured to provide weatherproof protection over the landing. The elegantly slim steel-enforced "lid" over the front door puts a modern twist on old forms.

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New context ... Raised, built in underneath and weatherproofed, this 1930s suburban house has been re-interpreted rather than remodelled.