

AT A GLANCE

Homeowners Joel and Blythe, and their children
Style of house Contemporary Australian **Timeframe** 12 months
Architect Auhaus Architecture + Interiors; Auhaus.com.au
Builder Life Spaces Group; Lifespacesgroup.com.au
Total cost \$695,000 for base package

BRAVE NEW WORLD

For this Barwon Heads couple, a knock-down rebuild was the only option, but time and money restraints led them to a new concept: a limited-edition architecturally designed **ready-to-build home**

BEFORE





LIVING



THE CREW



LIBRARY



BEFORE

SOMETIMES A HOUSE IS beyond renovating, and knocking it down and starting from scratch is the best option. But going it alone, individually selecting a team – from architect to builder – to do the job can be daunting, not to mention time consuming and expensive. Another option is to commission a custom-development firm to do the lot for you, which is what Joel and Blythe did to achieve their four-bedroom family home in Barwon Heads, Victoria.

SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT Designed by architecture firm Auhaus as part of a limited-edition series of house designs for property development company Life Spaces Group, the house – known as the “Courtyard House” – ticked all the boxes. It had all the benefits and credibility of a custom architect-designed home, was built specifically to suit their site and came in on time and budget. Elliot McLaren, co-founder of Life Spaces Group, says Joel and Blythe were the perfect clients. “They’re a young couple with children, entrenched in the local community, and extremely busy with life and running businesses,” he says. “But like many working parents, they just didn’t have the time to manage a bespoke design and build.”

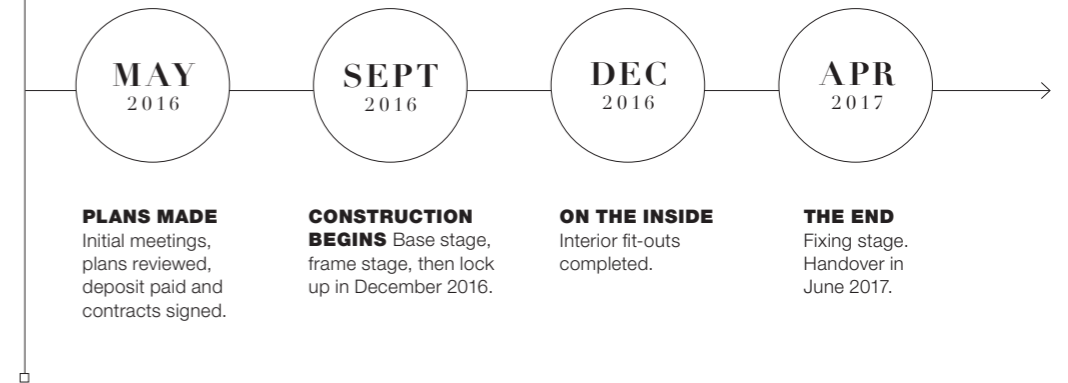
THE PRICE IS RIGHT Besides knowing they’d be buying a design by an architect whose work they love, the couple knew what they’d be in for financially as all the pricing is discussed up front – and that was appealing. “With every supplier on board, we’ve priced the product, from engineering to energy rating to slab design to paint and handles,” Elliot says. That said, not everything is set in stone. “If a client wants a bigger garage, a second showerhead, or doors on their rumpus room, that’s fine – so long as it doesn’t interfere with the integrity of the architect’s design.” →

Room with a view
The home has two living rooms, one in the open-plan kitchen/dining/living zone, and the other, shown here, is tucked away to one side of the courtyard.

text elle lovelock | photography mike baker | styling heather nette king

The crew From left, Benjamin Stibbard and Kate Fitzpatrick from Auhaus, and Elliott McLaren, Simon Babb and Grant Downie from Life Spaces Group.
Bookish nature Every bit of space was utilised. Here, the end of the hallway near the bedrooms was designed as a reading nook with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves.

TIMELINE JOEL AND BLYTHE’S TIME PLAN





WARDROBE



OFFICE

Join in Joinery throughout the home was made from Laminex in Classic White, pictured here in the study, accented with timber veneer in American oak, as seen in the built-in shelving and sideboard opposite.

Wet rooms The bathroom and laundry both feature 600mm porcelain floor tiles in Charcoal and 60mm x 240mm ceramic wall tiles in Matte White. Tapware and hardware from Sussex Taps.



BATHROOM



LAUNDRY



LOCAL DETAILS

Because many of the suppliers are local, homeowners can be as involved in the build and design process as they like. "For kitchens and bathrooms we've partnered with Melbourne brand Sussex Taps, and if a client is so inclined, they can come and watch the brass being smelted and their taps being hand-assembled," Elliot says. "You can't get that level of detail from something imported."

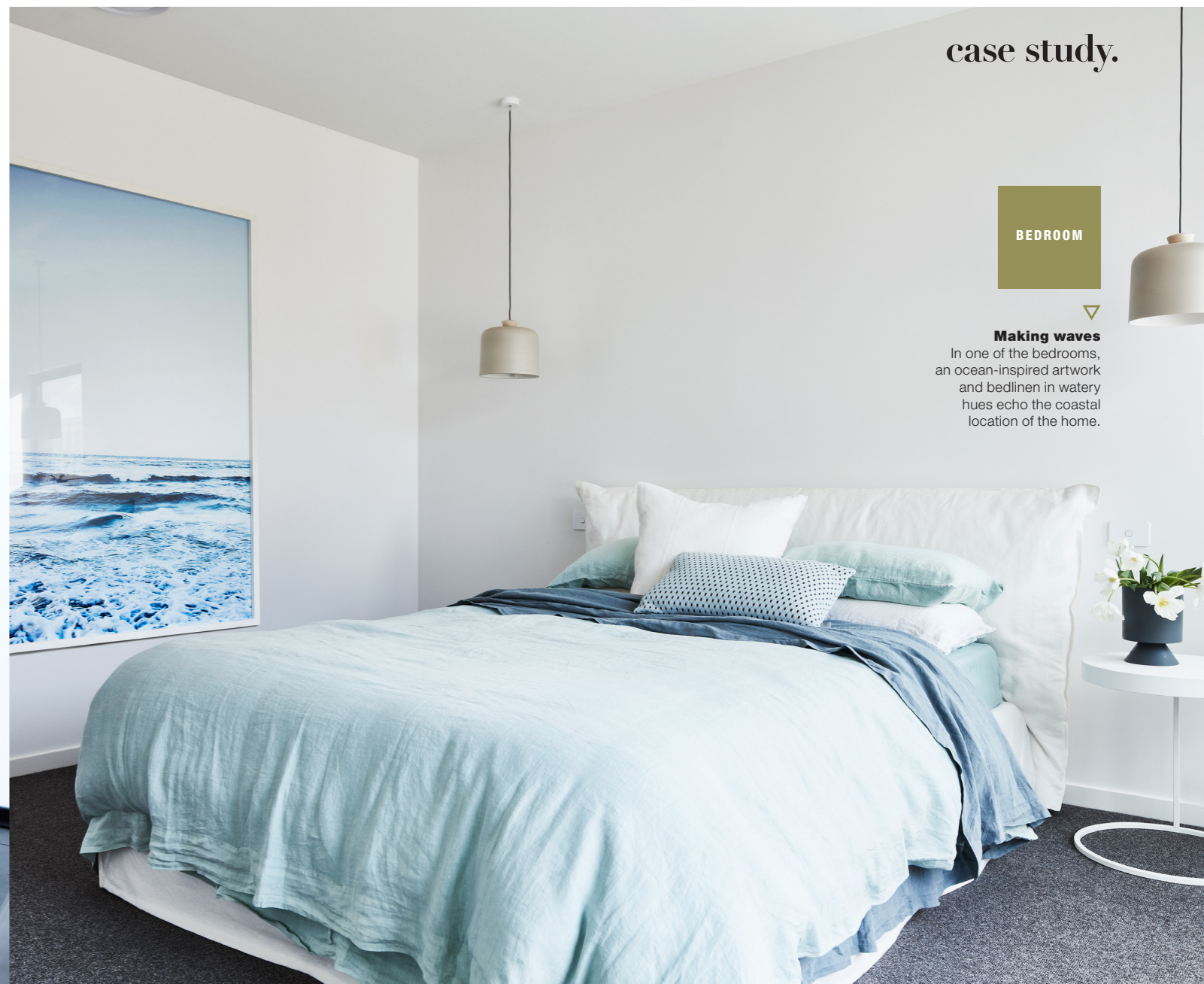
Light and shade The kitchen units are made from Laminex in Artisan Nero to contrast with the Elegant Oak engineered timber flooring in Smouldered by Hurford Flooring. →



Bathing beauty

A freestanding Cascade Aveo bath, accented with a Scala tap in Brushed Brass from Sussex Taps, is the centrepiece of the ensuite.

ENSUITE



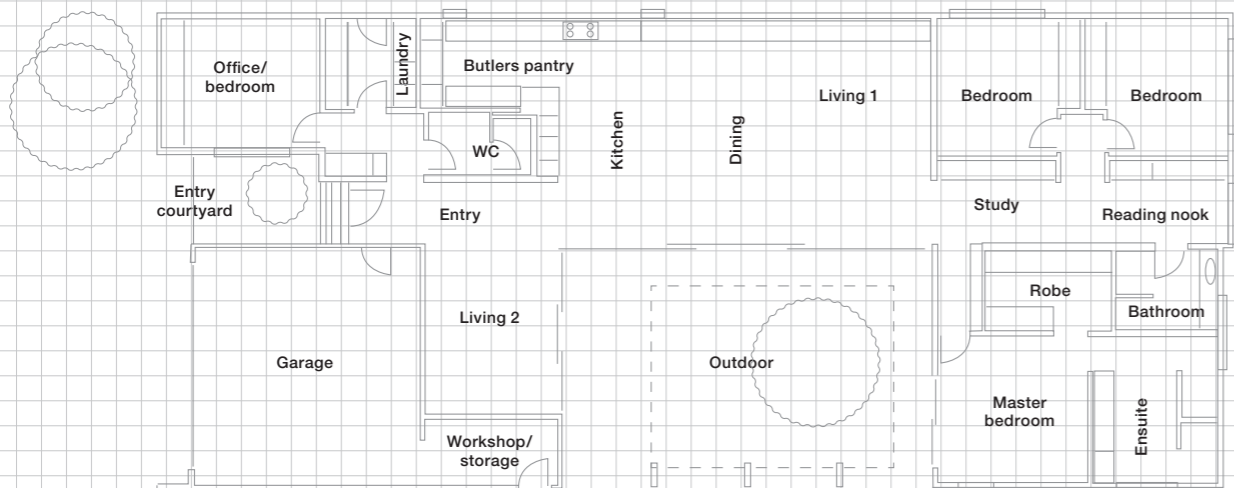
BEDROOM



Making waves

In one of the bedrooms, an ocean-inspired artwork and bedlinen in watery hues echo the coastal location of the home.

FLOORPLAN



COLOURS & FINISHES

FROM LEFT Elegant Oak engineered timber flooring in Smouldered from Hurford Flooring. EC Residence pure wool carpet in colour Eighty One. Laminex Colour wardrobe joinery in Classic White. Laminex Colour kitchen joinery in Artisan Nero.

“As far as new builds go, there is comfort knowing, what you will end up with.”

CHECK IT ALL OUT One of the first things Elliot and the team do is a site inspection to see if there will be any challenges in relation to the build. “On this job, as we do on all of our projects, we did full feature surveys and soil testing up front. It has to be thorough because if we deem a site isn’t going to be able to deliver what the architect intended, we won’t do the job,” Elliot says. Site secured, it was on with the build. Joel and Blythe had direct contact with Elliot and his team every step of the way. “We arranged regular site visits throughout the entire process so they could inspect every stage, but we took care of everything else,” Elliot says. And this meant the couple and their family could just get on with daily life.

THE END RESULT With soaring 3.5m ceilings, materials such as natural hardwood and bluestone, and a functional contemporary layout that wraps around a semi-enclosed courtyard, the home is recognisably an Auhaus design – and exactly what the homeowners wanted for their family. ●