

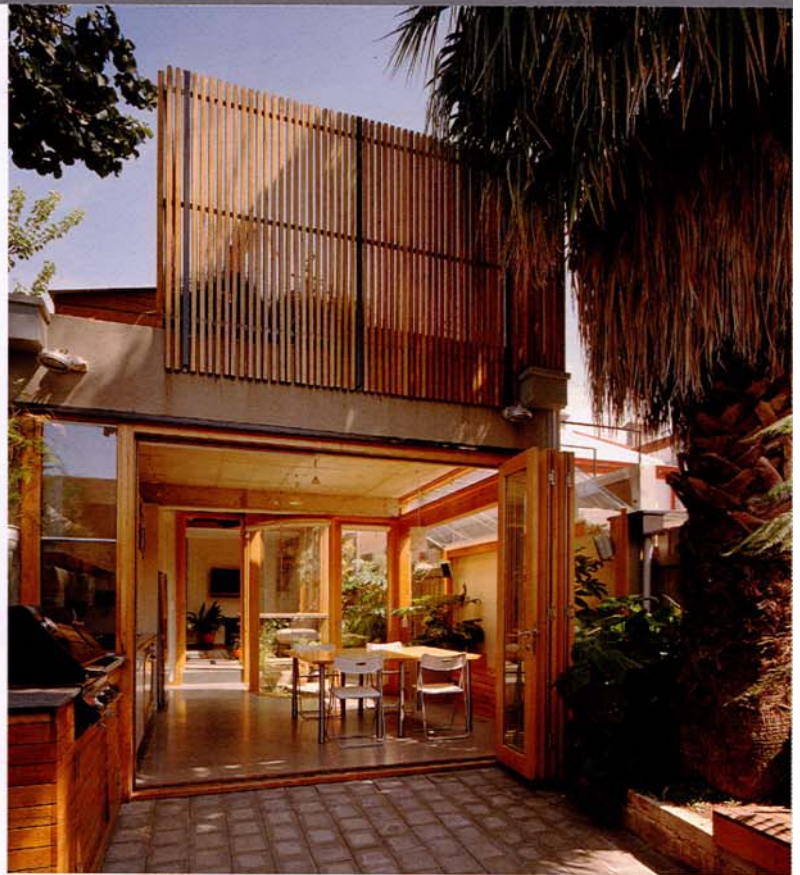
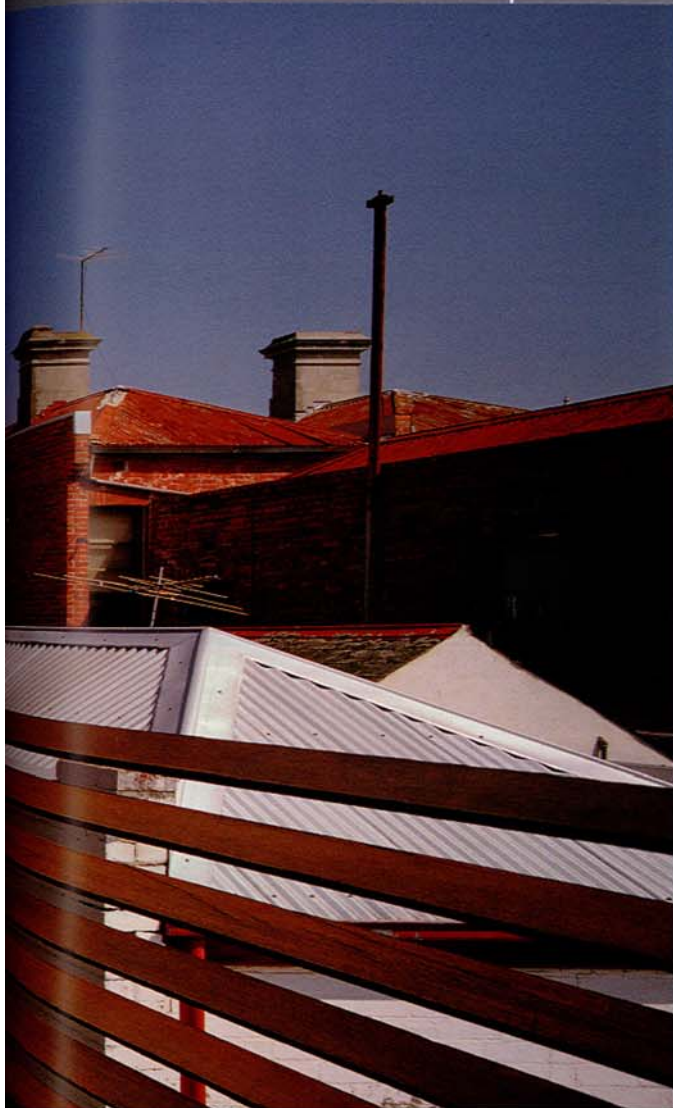
thinking about efficiency

Text by Rachel Lee-Leong Images courtesy of Zen Architects

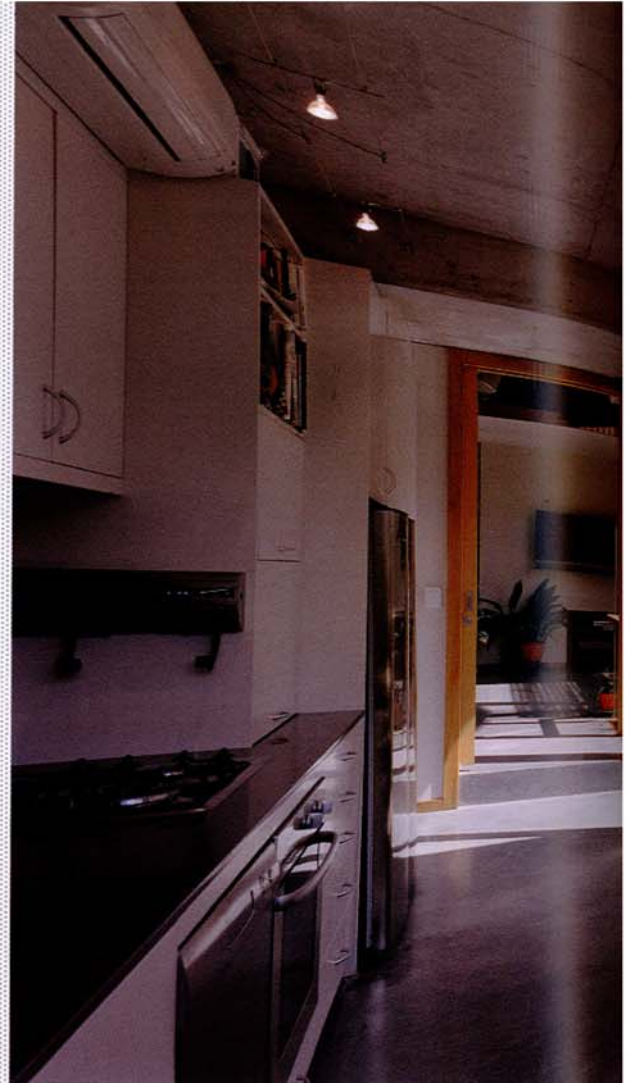


THIS PAGE: A dramatic roof gives the timber construct its identity OPPOSITE: The courtyard effortlessly leads to the kitchen

OF SPACE IN THE ECOLOGICAL ADVOCATE
THAT IS THE NORTH CARLTON GREEN HOUSE
BY ZEN ARCHITECTS



The idea of sustainable design is nothing new in Australia. While the rest of the world is busy playing catch up, Australian architects have had the notion of sustainability ingrained into their very beings. Often a given in many of their constructs, the art of ecological design has been perfected in their building practices. One such architectural practice is Zen Architects. Helmed by Riccardo Zen, its projects are manifest commitments to the environment,



Essentially, the timber-constructed North Carlton Green House is a landscape of spaces, both interior and exterior. The two have been seamlessly stitched together to form a giant quilt of living, breathing, sustainable spaces to delight. The house is almost sculptural in appearance, largely due to a dramatic roof that gives the construct its identity and moulds the spaces within. More than these however, the roof has been designed to facilitate the collection of rainwater, draining it into a storage tank to be used to for watering the gardens, effectively minimising water consumption. But not content with just that, Zen Architects set in place automated sub-surface irrigation systems that also minimise water loss through evaporation.

Every possible opportunity to incorporate sustainable design principles has been duly exploited. Firstly, the building encourages passive heating through a two-storey north-facing void that allows the sun to penetrate deep into the house. During warmer months, windows located to catch breezes cooled by the courtyard plants and pond provide passive cooling while a two-storey void facilitates natural heat removal through the stack effect.



THIS PAGE: The kitchen-cum-dining area is partially cut off from the lush courtyard yet enjoys greenery with indoor plants
OPPOSITE: Light floods the interior through a two-storey north-facing void



THIS PAGE: A modest open-air balcony puts one entirely with the elements OPPOSITE: The studio lets one appreciate the swooping contours fully

