

HIA - LANDCORP GREENSMART AWARDS 2003

THE INAUGURAL HIA-GREENSMART AWARDS WERE ANNOUNCED LAST WEEK AND THE RESPONSE SHOWS THE DEPTH OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND BUILDING PRACTICES USED WITHIN THE STATE. THESE ARE THE WINNING EIGHT ENTRANTS.



Harmony's way

IT WAS a great night for the Westbury Company at the HIA-GreenSmart award presentations, taking out three of the categories. A home in Hamilton Hill won it the Building of the Year and National Energy Efficiency awards, while a Bayswater home gave the company top honours in the Building Site Impact category.

The judges, in deciding the first award, said they were impressed with the low environmental impact and waste minimisation in the Hamilton Hill home where all elements contributed to passive cooling in summer and warming in winter to ensure that no air conditioning would be required.

For the energy-efficiency category, they saw the house as a complete package of design, use of appropriate materials, technologies and construction methods, with a balance of energy efficiency, comfort, light, harmony and function.

Owners Cathy Taylor and Ted Griffin achieved their objectives of making a low environmental impact during the construction phase and using passive-solar elements to keep down recurrent costs and maintenance. The attractive, functional home has three bedrooms, multiple living areas, a spacious loft and a big storage capacity.

Cathy and Ted had impressed on the builder their total commitment to a green home, even to a zero-tolerance stance on disturbance of the site. They had purchased a block next door to the Pinakarn Community whose ethos they shared of living lightly on the earth.

Solar architect Garry Bayerstock was given the task of fulfilling their dreams in a home that has made the smallest footprint on the block. They intend to grow their own food, have gardens for fruit, vegetables and herbs, and keep chickens.

They have pergolas to the east and west, complete with protective native vines and now are planning the major protective hood to the north. Also in the planning stage is a pond for frogs and fish in a native garden surround.

"Ted and I have always been greens, interested in environmental concerns," Cathy said. "Ted is a botanist and my work has involved nature conservation, specifically flora in urban remnants of bushland."

"We appreciated that you had to live lightly on the earth, hence the extensive use of deadfall timber, especially sheoak, and plantation wood. We seized the opportunity to buy a block next to the Pinakarn Community, achieving our dream of a more sustainable lifestyle. We have a high level of harmony with the site and harmony with the neighbouring community, sharing in many of their activities."

The builder saved a front tree with his sign and flagged shrubs around the boundary. Ted put up hessian screens to minimise any dust problem with neighbours. Poisoning of the soil was avoided with a fine-mesh, stainless-steel screen to combat termites.

The walls have been rendered externally and given a rustic-limestone look internally as a foil for a sizeable collection of art. The roof is a corrugated metal sandwich with a polyurethane core that achieves an R4 thermal rating.

The internal corrugated sheeting is the ceiling at the rake to most spaces, taken to a peak at 5m and enlivened in some areas with panels of Mini-orb.

The main walls of glazing are to the north for the passive-solar benefits but numerous cleverly positioned, high clerestory windows introduce shafts of light to the wall paintings.

Sunlight will penetrate up to 4.5m indoors in the depth of winter, the warmth being soaked up by the terracotta floor tiles and masonry walls downstairs and concrete floor upstairs.

With the solar hot-water system, the home's energy savings have been calculated at better than 50 per cent.

The kitchen cupboards have been built out of recycled materials, using an oiled sheoak planking to benches and old pressed-metal ceiling panels from a friend's home to doors.



CATEGORY
GreenSmart Building
of the Year

PARTNERED BY
LandCorp

COMPANY
The Westbury Company

CATEGORY
GreenSmart National
Energy Efficiency Award

PARTNERED BY
AlintaGas Networks

COMPANY
The Westbury Company