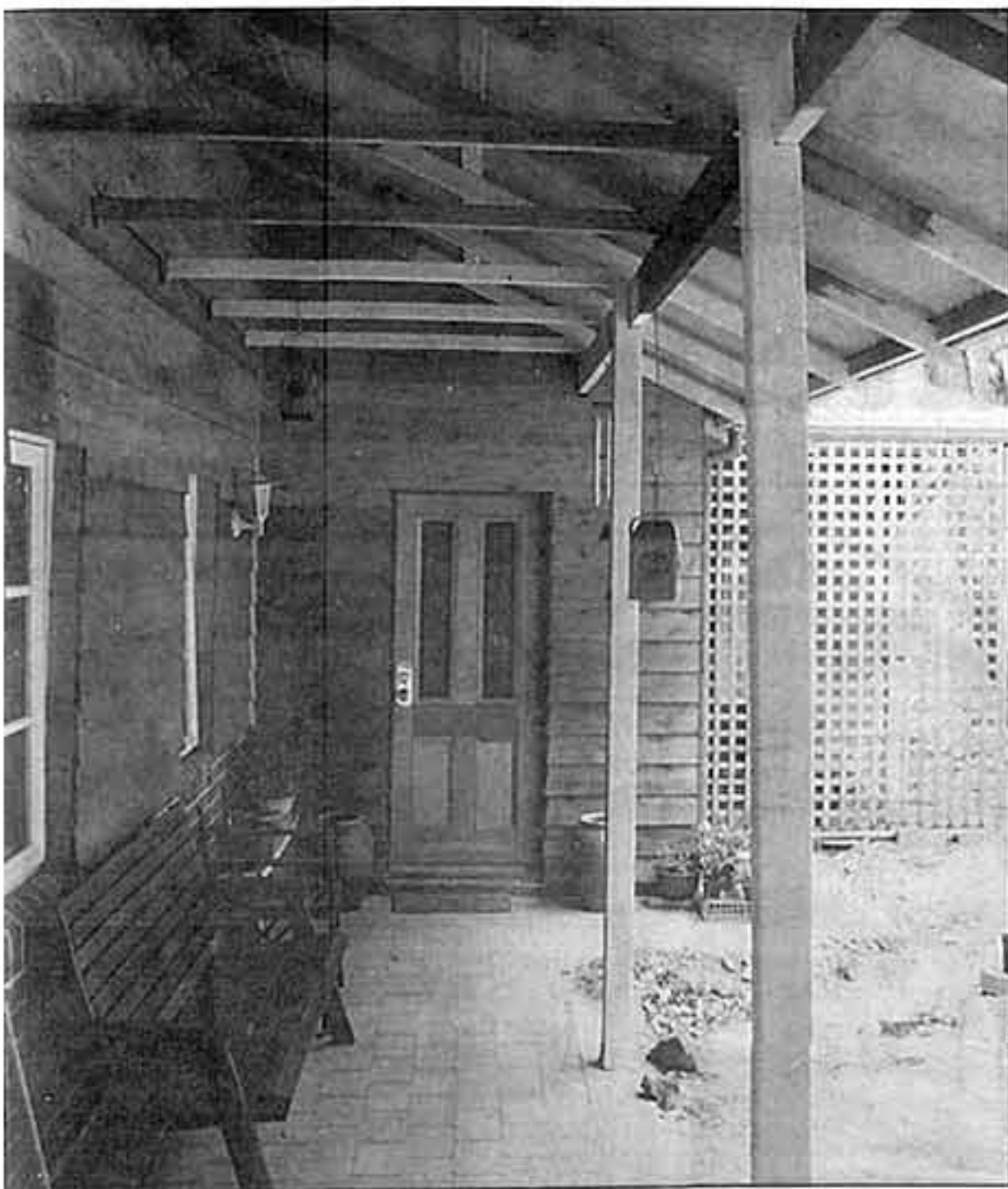


Design reaches for the sun



■ Kick off your boots and breathe easy on this sheltered veranda.

THERE is a little bit of old England in a charming cottage that respects and merges into a natural bush environment at Kalamunda.

The passive solar concept has a Georgian colonial feel but with structural elements in natural materials to harmonise with a near virgin hillside.

It does not sit on the traditional level sandpad but suggests that it is rising out of the ground and into the sunlight. The colours of the brickwork and the cedar weatherboarding were chosen to harmonise with the gravel colour of the soil while the mist green roof merges into the treetops.

Great care was taken to protect the native flora, including magnificent specimens of blackboys, or grass trees, while the big eucalypts almost seem to embrace the structure. Architect Garry Baverstock was so impressed with the lush bush look and its abundant wildflowers that he was reluctant to hack it about for the home.

As a result you can easily miss and drive past the home which is set well back from the road. It all suddenly emerges at the end of a meandering gravel drive that is like progressing through an arcade of trees.

The cottage rates as a reverse brick veneer in that it has the main structural component of internal walls in red brickwork. The cedar boarding to the exterior is insulated to ensure year-round interior comfort.

"This form of construction is more thermally efficient than double brick and it is also more suitable to clay sites in the hills," said Mr Baverstock. "Though it has an English cottage look it is a full passive solar design with the correct area of glass to the north.

"The deck flows out to the north-east to get the morning sun in winter and complete a practical environment for year round living outdoors. An outstanding feature of this deck is the Tecto solar pergola with angled louvres that allow maximum sun penetration in winter while affording 100 per cent solid shade in summer.

"Traditional English elements include a floating gable with a clerestory window, source of the diffused lighting for the whole of the country kitchen. Bright natural lighting to all living areas was a requirement of the owners, especially after their experiences in dingy digs of pre-war origins.

"The passive solar concept was a must, the owners being well aware of the significant energy savings, the year-round comfort

ON DISPLAY

Kalamunda

■ Price:	Not applicable
■ Address:	On application
■ Agent:	Garry Baverstock, architect Phone 474 2770
■ Open:	Viewing by appointment

indoors and the bright natural lighting of all spaces, especially in winter.

"The house qualifies on a criteria basis for a maximum five-star rating in a new State Government initiative to be introduced from next February. This will open the door to all the technical information needed to produce an energy saving house, a paramount objective in our near future."

The main entry to the home is off the carport and at the rear, fitting in with the hideaway qualities of the cottage. But the decision was made for practical reasons, to achieve maximum protection from the elements and to get a central location for a hall that would relate directly to all main zones.

The living room is classical with the big comfortable chairs one end grouped to an ornate open fireplace while at the other end is the main dining area. The outlook everywhere is to the trees and a french door provides the invitation to go out on the expansive deck.

The soft, diffused lighting of the country kitchen means that the chef is never working in shadow on any part of more than 7m of bench cupboards. Storage is significantly increased with a wall of cabinets in place of the pantry.

The adjoining breakfast area provides a bright introduction to the day, a relaxing space for up to four people at meal times or to enjoy a morning cuppa with the newspaper. The ceiling in this room is vaulted to give volume to a generous space.

The sleeping zone is as far away as possible from the television in the sitting room, so that people can retire early in peace. The owners have a master suite with dressing room and private bathroom, and a window that not only takes in the trees but a glimpse to the distant blue hills.

The cottage is not open for inspection but can be seen by appointment with architect Garry Baverstock.

Frank Platell



■ TOP: Emerging from the bush, this passive solar house harmonises with nature.
■ ABOVE: The owners required bright, natural light.