

NEW HOMES

# Sand dune

By Frank Platell



■ LEFT: The steep wind-swept site creates a dramatic setting for this passive solar, architect designed home.

**I**MPORTANT environmental considerations and a panoramic sea view dictated the planning of this very private residence atop one of the highest sand dunes on the Quinns Rocks beachfront.

The first was the preservation of the natural topography and its vegetation, especially in the south-west corner for wind protection to a fragile area.

The ground floor is actually on the retained peak of the hill, the cut and fill virtually confined to the steep driveway spiralling up the slope to the undercroft garage for vehicles and a boat.

Limestone to retaining walls and main front steps, plus the matching colour of the rendered walls to the residence give it all immediate harmony with the area. It is private from Robinson Avenue, the roadway well below.

Passive solar principles for year-round living comfort and significant energy savings actually dictated the planning and the overall shape. A stepped profile to the north-west met requirements and opened up the potential for views up the coast, where the Alkimos is stuck firm on the rocks.

Glazing to this elevation exploits the northerly sun in winter which will penetrate up to 3m indoors in the cold weather. A pergola to the wide deck has specially-angled timber louvres to completely exclude direct sunlight in the heat of summer, and the space is like a big outdoor room.

A skylight to the sun room achieves much the same effect because it shares the same pergola-like structure. A bonus with the site is efficient cross ventilation in summer, when any heat buildup is quickly vented by strong sea breeze, and the mean temperature indoors rarely exceeds 25C.

The glazing to the west is minimised with a staggered elevation and one can appreciate the 180-degree view seawards from different zones of the home. A big surprise indoors is the inclusion of an atrium off the formal zone, where a gargoyle spouts into a reflective pool and sets the scene for an alfresco lifestyle.

Owners Murray and Sylvia Hamilton had seen how practical and efficient a passive solar home could be, and wanted such a concept in a peaceful retreat for their active retirement years. They had specific accommodation requirements which included a big, well-appointed kitchen as the hub of the design, and sharing the views.

For architect Garry Baverstock, the site was the challenge, to keep to the original steep contours. The structure had to marry into the area in timeless Mediterranean style, getting street appeal with flush gables, decorative fan leadlights and clerestory windows.

It has been built to a zero lot-line on the east side which made glazing to the south important for balanced natural lighting of spaces elongated east-west as much as possible.

Main living areas have been enlivened by raking up ceilings at the steep pitch of the roof, and this has led to many interesting angles to windows, screen walls and spaces.

The steep driveway, paved in the pattern of the Appian Way, leads up to the big garage in the undercroft, and this has a lift up into the house for people and the shopping.

**I**MEDIATELY behind the garage is a scullery area for the fish catch, to keep mess out of the home, and beyond this a landscaped garden with steps up under the wide deck.

The main entry to the home is up wide limestone steps where a door opens to a lofty foyer, an area for greeting guests in some style. The blackbutt parquetry flooring here which imparts such warmth extends through most of the living areas, except the lounge.

This formal sitting area has the furnishings grouped to an ornate open fireplace with a gas heater. Behind a screen wall is the formal eating area, capable of taking a table expanded out to seat 12, and this in turn relates to that wide, wrap-around timber deck.

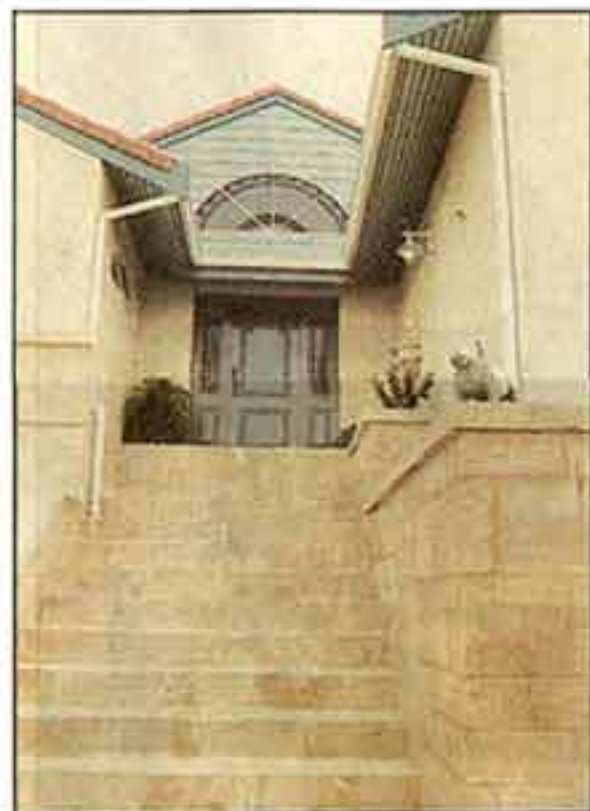
Introduction of a short 45-degree passage has resulted in a five-sided family zone extending overall for about 10m one way and 6m the other, where the ceiling apex is about 5.5m up. The kitchen is well defined in the open area with about 9m of bench cupboards, plus a partition that looks like the dresser of yesteryear and, of course, there is a real pantry.

This informal zone has separate television and CD areas, a hobby studio with a wall of cupboards and bi-fold doors to the bright breakfast area. The view from here and from the deck is magnificent at this height.

The main suite has a big bedroom and behind the double-bed is a full-width dressing room. The en suite is luxury.

A dual-access powder room means that guests do not have to intrude into the main suite. Guests have their own sleeping zone with two big bedrooms and a second bathroom. The house is not open for inspection and can only be seen by appointment with the architect.

## splendour

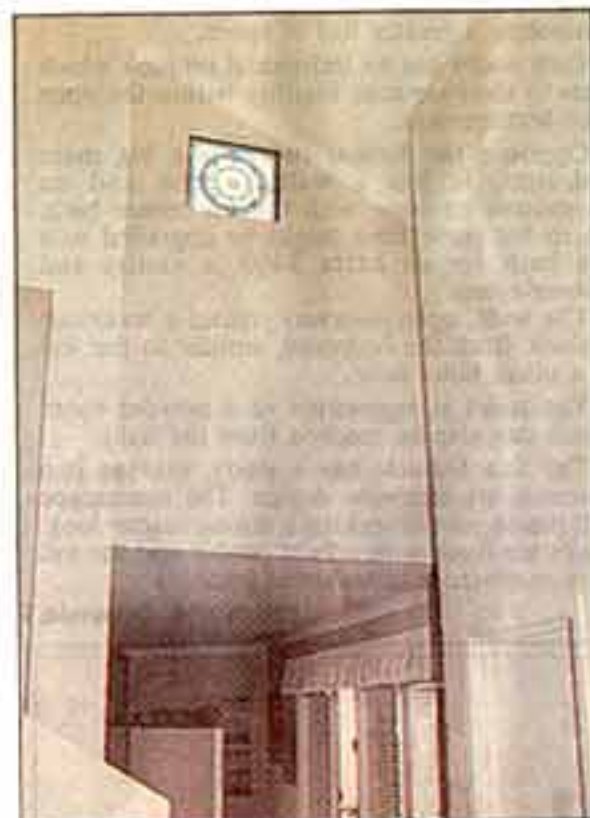


■ RIGHT: The formal eating area relates to the wide, wrap-around deck.

■ The main entry is up wide limestone steps to a lofty foyer.



■ The hub of the design is the big, well-appointed kitchen, plus pantry.



■ Interesting angles to windows, screen walls and spaces are a feature.



■ A sheltered garden, perfect for the owners' active retirement.

**ON DISPLAY**  
**Quinns Rocks**

- Price: Not applicable
- Address: Robinson Avenue
- Agent: Garry Baverstock, architect  
Phone 474 2770
- Open: Viewing by appointment