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HIGHGATE HILL HOUSE

The Highgate Hill residence designed by Richard Kirk Architects and built between 2005 and 2007, is a much coveted abode located adjacent to one Brisbane's oldest ridgeline roads, Dornoch Terrace.





The Highgate Hill residence is positioned on a steep rectangular site within a lush landscape environment. A variety of native and exotic plants adds to the overall aesthetic of the property. According to Richard Kirk Architect, the connection of the house to the outdoor ground plane provides two opposing atmospheres. The north facing side features rich landscape and the east side faces Dornoch Terrace from a floating single level hovering over fine steel pins, providing a protective canopy. The south and west sides offer views into the distance and reveal the monumental character of the three-level residence.

The floating living area exudes intimacy and serenity. The materials and ornate detailing are fine and decorative, with a series of layered fine vertical timber beams acting as a veil on the upper level of the building facing the street. A screen facing the street adds privacy and an aesthetically pleasing façade. The façade of the upper level of the northern walls feature glazed vertical timber sticks, providing an inviting gateway from the interior to the abundant landscape outside. The surreal effect of the northern light filtered through the canopy of the trees provides a tranquil nature escape. The upper level comprises the bedrooms and a void over the dining area in the middle level, providing a spacious entertainment area.

The Highgate Hill residence's main entrance from the street takes you to the middle level where the living and dining areas are located, and

also integrates the landscape with the living spaces through generously proportioned external openings and magnificent floating platforms of timber decking. The beams are designed to be reminiscent of tall thin trees. The north and east facing walls open completely via a series of sliding glazed timber panels, merging the interior with the exterior. The lower level contains a guest room and a media space. The void within the house acts not only as a spatial device to complement the verticality of the tall trees outside, but acts as a divider to separate the bedrooms. The design of the staircase is not only structurally innovative, but enhances the overall aesthetic with a sculptural element, twisting subtly to provide access to all levels. To maintain its emphasis on the landscape, the house is entirely constructed from timber, and the glazed façade features give it subtle detailing.

The innovative architectural design and serene location of this property makes it a modern masterpiece placed within a peaceful natural setting. The emphasis on the strong vertical lines and beams visually elongates the structure to complement the surroundings of tall trees and the modern architectural design juxtaposes the natural environment with a contemporary edge.

BY JESSICA EBSER



(1) Inside/outside aesthetic (Patrick Bingham-Hall) (2) Vertical lines elongate the structure (Patrick Bingham-Hall) (3) The middle level featuring the living and dining areas (Patrick Bingham-Hall) (4) View from Dornoch Terrace (Jon Linkins) (5) The spacious outdoor entertainment area (Jon Linkins) (6) Panoramic landscape views from the middle level (Jon Linkins) (7) Illuminated by night (Patrick Bingham-Hall) (8) The multi-level structure took two years to build (Patrick Bingham-Hall)

Images by Patrick Bingham-Hall & Jon Linkins

