

A neighbourly family legacy

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HOW OFTEN IS A HOUSE REQUIRED TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR?
 WHEN IT'S ONE OF ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF HAHEI SITES WHICH
 CAN TRULY BE CONSIDERED 'ON THE BEACH'

The Flexman family holiday home is one such site. The idea of the house being a good neighbour – to the properties next door, and the people on the beach, was established early on by Tim McCoy from McCoy + Heine Architects. Tim used recesses and depth to soften the beach-facing facade, and established three distinct parts to the building to reduce the bulk presented to the beach. The responsibility of developing a 'neighbourly' house, was coupled with an intention to maximise the stunning sea views for its occupants, but minimise the fishbowl effect that can result.

The Hahei beach house is owned by the Flexman siblings; James, Andrew and Emma. They required a new dwelling to replace the original family beach house, which was no longer fit-for-purpose for their growing extended families.

The Flexman family comprises of six adults and nine children and they wanted a house that could expand when they holidayed together and contract to fit a single family. Spacious communal living had to be balanced with the need to retreat. Multiple indoor rooms and separate spaces were designed to offer privacy when needed while outdoor

spaces were considered as important as those created inside, given the beach location and summer climate. The house offers the opportunity to follow the sun around a variety of outdoor 'rooms' while avoiding any inclement weather. On occasions the house has accommodated up to 40 people, as the family have hosted numerous large gatherings and a few special celebrations too. This has meant that spaciousness and comfort is vital.

And most important to the siblings, was their wish for a place they could continue to create the holiday memories afforded them by their late parents. The Hahei property and the memories contained within it, has been lovingly passed down through three generations. The new house was created to carry this legacy forward.

Tim McCoy says the family are "thrilled" with the house and were very open to suggestions and the original scheme was hardly changed when it came to the design and build.

Of the builders Whitianga's Percival Construction, James Flexman says; "We have been highly impressed with everything Damian Percival has done. Firstly, as the home was architecturally designed and with high specifications, it was important to engage an experienced builder, and secondly, as we live in Auckland and not able to visit the project regularly it was critical to engage someone who was an experienced and proven project manager."

The Flexman House won the Architecture and Construction awards in 2013; taking out the NZIA Waikato Bay of Plenty Housing 2013 Award for McCoy + Heine and the Nulook New Homes Regional House of the Year gold award for Percival Construction.

Three years on, the Flexman family are still reaping the rewards of a place which provides them with everything they could wish for, in continuing their Hahei family legacy. ●

Recesses and depth soften the impact from the beach.



Expansive open-plan living for communal family holidays.



A private outdoor space to follow the summer sun.