

REDCLIFFS HOUSE REBUILD

SOUTHERN RESPONSE – CHRISTCHURCH



This project is a compact, two bedroom house rebuild after the previous dwelling suffered earthquake damage. The budget was small despite a very steep and challenging site. We needed to design a low-cost build that maintained quality and celebrated the site's panoramic ocean and mountain views.

Our first strategy for budget control was to keep the building envelope as simple and easy to build as possible. So we chose a plain form and clad it in humble materials. This led to the idea for a folding roof and wall element that wraps over and down, anchored at its base and connected at its top, to give the notion of protection to the accommodation beneath. The direct contrast of the roofing iron to the plywood side walls creates the image of a continuous façade and roof. It also has the advantage of not requiring painting given its difficult, steep access.

The site also suffers from what gives it its best attribute – stunning views that are exposed to the cold easterly sea breezes. Therefore we cut an outdoor living room into the house form to provide access to the views while affording a degree of shelter from the wind.

We exploited views internally with extensive southern glazing, the focal point of the design being a large landscape window that spans the full length of the living space to bring the view inside. The open planning of the top floor allows views to be enjoyed from all corners.

We located the two bedrooms and a bathroom downstairs. Although the views are not as spectacular at this level, we have still maximised the site experience with floor-to-ceiling glazing in the bedrooms and bathroom.

The client was so delighted with the outcome that, as the building started taking shape, he decided to increase the budget for the internal finishes.