

URBAN LODGE

WELHAUS – CHRISTCHURCH



This is one of a series of house designs we have completed for Welhaus, a Christchurch development and construction company specialising in pre-engineered, panellised, and affordable homes. They required a smart, compact house for their portfolio – 75m² of total floor area across two storeys. The house would feature a mezzanine and double height space, be energy efficient and Lifemark accessible, and have elegant design aesthetics.

We designed the *Urban Lodge* to be a flexible living template. It can be built as a single unit or grouped in a terrace house format for economies of scale. This fun architectural package balances style, economy, and prefabrication, while different finishes and orientations provide opportunities for uniqueness within the design template.

To maximise the quality of living within the 75m² available, we located one bedroom on the ground floor with a hallway and alcove for cloaks and shoes. Adjacent is an accessible bathroom/laundry and kitchen. Within the double-height dining and living volume, a mezzanine is positioned over the kitchen to create a generous loft space which overlooks the spaces below. It can be used as a study, guest room or additional living space. Past the mezzanine, and stacked above the ground-floor bedroom, a second bedroom is tucked away and defined by the sloping loft ceiling and generous double-glazed skylights.

The external form is defined by a simple but elegant gable roof. Eaves are purposefully low to create well-proportioned internal spaces in relation to the narrow footprint, while the steep roof pitch ensures a generous internal volume without making the building overly tall. Through extensive glazing and double-height volumes, we have overcome the ‘compact’ nature of the internal spaces. The glazing also offers attractive external design details, such as the projecting mezzanine floor window and the large gable window.

The prefabricated timber structure and detail features throughout the house. Solid engineered timber is used for floors, walls, roofs and balustrades, as well as structural elements such as beams and a timber portal. Naturally, for a panellised, prefabricated system, the exterior is sheet timber cladding. We have also specified high levels of insulation, high-performance windows and doors, and airtight construction.

Our Urban Lodge design for Welhaus was acknowledged by the Design Institute of New Zealand for *Best Design for Diversity in Compact Design in Residential Interiors* and was a finalist in their 2016 Residential Interiors Awards.